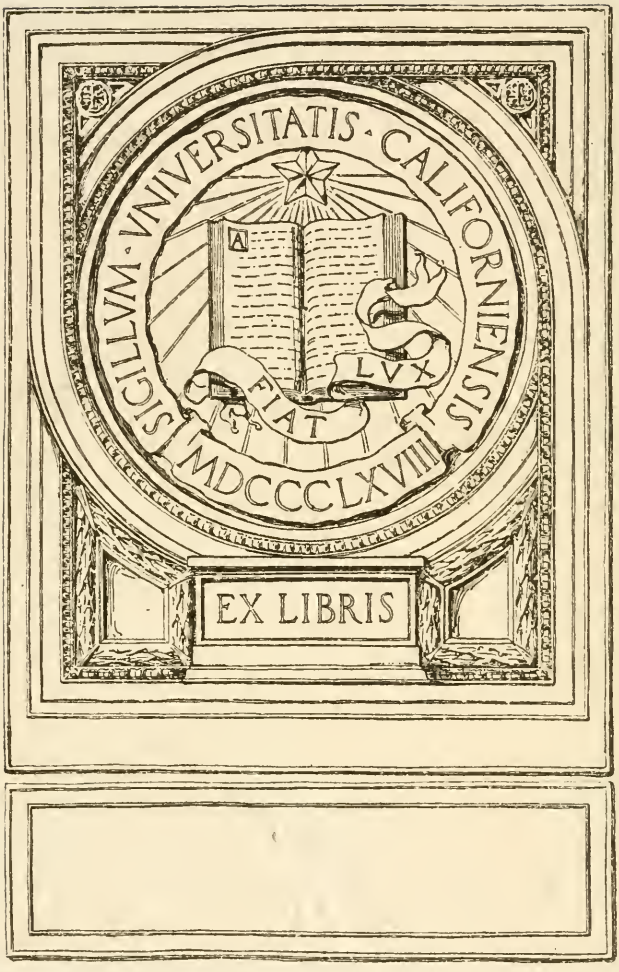
WITH THE BULGARIAN STAFF

NOEL BUXTON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WITH THE BULGARIAN STAFF

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DIRECTING THE BATTLE AT CHATALJA.

From left to right: Colonel Nerezoff (Chief of the Intelligence Department), Colonel Jostoff (Chief of General Dimitrieff's Staff), General Savoff (Commander-in-Chief), General Dimitrieff (Commanding the combined Armies at the front).

WITH THE BULGARIAN STAFF

BY

NOEL BUXTON, M.P.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO THE MEMORY OF

THOMAS PALMER NEWBOULD

WHO COUNTED THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM

OF MORE VALUE THAN LIFE

AND DIED FIGHTING

FOR THE BALKAN ALLIES

JANUARY 1913

(*Vide note, p. vi.*)

267382

THE LATE MR. PALMER NEWBOULD

Mr. T. P. Newbould was killed while fighting in the ranks of the Greek Army on January 1st, 1913.

The special interest of Mr. Newbould's sacrifice of his life lies in his character as a man, not only enthusiastic, but of the order-loving type, and immersed in prosaic business. Even in proposals of the most quixotic kind in a recent letter to me, he devoted several pages to details of organisation which the Byronic temperament would resent. This makes his action all the more noteworthy. It is not often that a man of any kind gives life itself for an altruistic end. It is still rarer for a man of a temperament specially sane. The act implies no doubt an emotional instinct for dedication, but in a man of this type a great deal more. He does not risk the cessation of everything visible and sensuous without balancing the pros and cons. He decides quite deliberately that the advantage of proving his belief in something greater than the visible outweighs all that can be said for a long-continued life of minor services. Everyone thinks a good object worth a certain amount of trouble, if that trouble is not too painful. Newbould held the benefit of liberation from tyranny to be so great, and the belief in the unseen and the moral to be so important, that he judged it worth while to abandon altogether the sensuous life.

Just before a meeting of the Balkan Committee in the House of Commons, at the outbreak of war, some of us begged him at least to delay his departure. He consented to reflect, but during the meeting of the Committee he whispered that delay might mean the intervention (or the unwelcome applause) of his friends, and he left at once for the front. He wished to prove the reality of his belief, and he succeeded.

PREFACE

My connection with the work of the Balkan Committee has brought me the friendship of many Balkan statesmen, and it was to that connection that I owed the privilege of being attached to the Bulgarian General Staff at a critical period of the campaign in Thrace, and of seeing much that was beyond the reach of the foreign military attachés.

I am allowed to illustrate the point by quoting the following passage from a letter recently received from Mr. Gueshoff, the Bulgarian Prime Minister: 'The unceasing labour of the Balkan Committee to impress its objects upon public opinion brought about a change in that opinion which we most gratefully acknowledge. The Committee was a real

prophet when it declared that unless effective reforms were speedily carried out, the bloodshed and anarchy, which daily grew worse in Macedonia, would find their climax in a war between Turkey and Bulgaria.

'The war predicted broke out. And it broke out in spite of their and our efforts to avert it, by opening the eyes of the Young Turks to the urgency of inaugurating a policy of real reforms. Do you remember your visit to Sofia in the spring of 1911? You were coming from Constantinople, where you had spoken with the Young Turks. You spoke with us too. And we agreed that the wisest course for Bulgaria was to continue to give a fair trial to the new Turkish régime.

'That trial lasted more than four years. You and we strained all our exertions to persuade the Young Turks that Macedonia must be pacified, that an end must be put to the bloodshed and anarchy which were ruining that distracted province. All was in vain. Rampant lawlessness,

total want of discipline, produced horrors which recalled those of 1876 and 1903. We had the massacres of Ishtib and Kotchane. The cup was filled to overflowing. Our patience was exhausted. And having been provoked by the Turks, we mobilised.

'The definitive results of the war which ensued and which is still raging, cannot be foreseen. The after-pains succeeding the birth of the new order which is evolving out of disorder in the Balkan Peninsula may last some time yet. But one thing is certain. The *fons et origo* of the anarchy and bloodshed will be removed. The grave responsibilities incurred by Great Britain in 1878 at the Congress of Berlin, when she secured the restoration of Macedonia to the rule of the Turk, will harass no longer the conscience of England. The area of massacre and outrage in South-Eastern Europe will disappear. And as those were the objects of the Balkan Committee, it must be congratulated upon having achieved what

few other political societies have been able to achieve—upon having attained its objects within the short space of nine years.'

It was the work of the Balkan Committee again which was referred to in a letter addressed to me by General Savoff at the close of my visit. 'It was our duty to give you, so far as the interests of war permitted, the possibility of witnessing the realisation of an idea to which you were attached.'

I should indeed be ungrateful if I did not acknowledge to Mr. Gueshoff and to General Savoff and his staff the obligations I am under to them, not only for their unfailing kindness, but for the opportunity of a unique experience.

In a previous book, 'Europe and the Turks,' I have discussed some political aspects of Balkan affairs. In the present case I have endeavoured to write not as one concerned with the future of the Balkan peoples (a future which is now happily in their own hands), but from the

point of view of any politician, who, having the uncommon opportunity of seeing 'the great game' of war, is in a position to feel its absorbing interest and to estimate its value.

I desire to thank the Editors of the *Contemporary Review* and the *Nineteenth Century and After* for their kind permission to reprint two articles previously published by them.

I am specially indebted to Mr. Tchaprachikoff, Private Secretary to King Ferdinand, for his generous permission to publish photographs taken by him at the front.

My particular gratitude is due to Mr. J. H. Whitehouse, M.P., for assistance afforded me in many ways—assistance without which this volume would not have been written.

NOEL BUXTON.

House of Commons,
March, 1913.

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WITH THE BULGARIAN STAFF

I.—THE GAIN

CHAPTER I

LIBERATION

WITHIN eighteen days of the outbreak of war the Bulgarian headquarters moved from Stara Zagora toward the Turkish frontier. Motors were available as far as Kizil Agach, and there, by special favour of the Prime Minister and General Savoff, my brother and I became attached to the staff—a stroke of good fortune on which we could not wish to improve. On Friday, November 8 (1912), before dawn, we found excellent horses at the door of the

peasant's hut which had sheltered us. The baggage was to follow in carts, and for three days we saw it no more. We set off across the open country, following the route taken by the first army on October 18. Two squadrons of cavalry formed our escort. In front of them rode the junior officers of the staff departments; further to the front the heads of sections—cartography, translation, intelligence; General Tsenoff representing the gunners, General Yankoff the sappers; finally, at a distance which other generals tacitly respected, Ficheff, chief of the Staff, and Savoff himself, distinguished from other generals by no difference of dress or accoutrement, but marked by a certain air of mental force as much by the shoulders as by the face.

The moment which a downtrodden race had so long awaited was come. A determined but patient people had found its vindication. Here were the leaders of the liberation, laying firm claim to the fatherland. Bulgarian feeling runs

MILITARY ATTACHÉS.

(Colonel Lyon, British Military Attaché, is fourth from the left.)

deep, so deep that some think it non-existent. So thrilling, at all events, was this dramatic entry that the most expressive would have felt constrained to hide his emotion.

At about three o'clock we crossed the frontier line. It is marked by a cutting through the oak scrub along the ridge of the rolling hills. One would have supposed from the silence of the officers that they had not noticed the fact. The troopers, however, went so far as to betray an interest in their entry on the promised land. They asked the squadron officers if they might raise a hurrah. The captain sternly refused, telling them that General Savoff would not like it.

Within half an hour we came on a burnt village. Nothing remained alive, except the dogs and a few lean cats. Human bodies formed their food, but grey crows were hungry competitors. The next village was still burning, and we stopped to explore. Not a soul remained.

Rejoining the Staff, we found them betraying more interest than had been observable before. They had already come upon the first trenches which they had yet seen. Here the First Army had fought its way, heading south-east towards Kirklisse, while the Third Army, on its left, had descended from the north. There were big graves, both of Bulgarians and Turks. Then came another deserted village ; from here it was reported that the Turks had carried off twenty-five Bulgarian girls before their retreat.

On the crest of the next ridge we suddenly came to a point overlooking the immense plain of Adrianople. The sound of the cannonade, audible since morning, now grew near and insistent. It resembled nothing so much as a groan or growl, gigantic as the voice of a whole nation. Shrapnel was bursting over the forts with the effect of a sky-rocket when the stars are discharged and drift with an air of serene calm. Following the explosion, in the steady breeze that was blowing, the

compact body of white smoke floated slowly through the cloudless air like a balloon.

We passed the great feudal farm of a Turkish bey. He had tried to protect the villagers. There was a great readiness to speak well of a Turk where he deserved it. Bullocks and buffaloes, pulling guns, had fallen dead here. Dogs had torn off the skin, and gnawed the succulent muscles next the spine. The flayed and swollen carcases were conspicuous on the brown land, lurid with various shades of purple, yellow, and red.

The fighting here, in the first week of the war, caused the panic at Kirklisse. It was the decisive battle, but it was never reported by the Government. In London its very name is unknown. When I remarked on this, General Ficheff replied, 'Why should we report it? We did not want to advertise; we wanted to work.'

We arrived in total darkness in the muddy lanes of Tatarla, where was a halting-place for the field hospitals.

We were thankful, after ten hours' riding, to find that one of them could be spared for ourselves. Several straw palliasses provided a rest for their owners, even before supper was ready. The night was dark, but the flashlights of the besieged in Adrianople continually lit up the sky. Turned hastily from one quarter to another, they irresistibly suggested a bad fit of nerves in the garrison; at other times, moving continually round all quarters of the compass and lighting up the clouds, they resembled the intermittent flash of a lighthouse. At night the cannonade was unusually well sustained, and those were sound sleepers for whom it did not spoil a night's rest.

At Tatarla there was no question of shaving or washing, but before starting in the morning there was the luxury of a glass of tea with bread and cheese, laid out on a field-hospital table outside the tent.

Knowing that the Staff would not ride

very fast, we stopped behind to look at the field hospitals, and talk to the wounded. The whole stream of wounded from Lule Burgas had to be brought by this route into Bulgaria, before they could receive anything better than the first aid given at the front. It was almost incredible that the outgoing transport of ammunition and food should entirely pass by mud tracks through wooded hills, a journey of six days from Stara Zagora to Kirklisse. It was still more astounding that the wounded should survive this journey, and that many very severe cases were successfully treated in Bulgaria at the end of it. The foreign Red Cross missions which later on came to Kirklisse found the hardships of sleeping out in their waggons quite sufficiently severe. There were as a rule two to occupy each waggon. At first there was adequate straw or hay to relieve the shoulders and hips, and to somewhat increase the width of the waggon, which broadens out upwards from a narrow base; but as the oxen consumed the straw the bedding became

worse and worse, till finally there were only the narrow planks, some two feet wide, on which to rest. It was sufficiently surprising that even the English ladies of the Women's Convoy Corps survived this experience without breakdown ; all the more was it harrowing to think of the men with broken bones and important organs lacerated, jolting for six, and even eight, days in these springless ox-carts, with bitter frost at night, and with no covering but the wicker hood.

The military telegraph office at Tatarla undertook to send for me the following despatch :

'Adrianople not having fallen, the wounded must cross mountains. Many days jolting in springless carts. Bitter frost. Wounded stop here in transport hospital ; some mutilated. Equipment badly wanted.'

Such were the melancholy facts. In many cases mutilation of the most

disgusting kind had taken place when fighting shifted from one area to another, and Bulgarian soldiers fell into the hands of Turks. Mercifully there were not many mutilated who remained alive; but some such cases actually lived, and had passed through this hospital. One man survived, but without ears. The story was as follows :

Two men were left wounded together when the Turkish troops advanced. There was a considerable pause at this stage, and the two men were carried into a house where the Turks, with their usual want of logic, interested themselves in mutilation rather than in watching the enemy. Both had the presence of mind to remember that their only chance of life was to feign death. The first had sufficient endurance to remain passive as the knife severed his ear. The Turk thinking him dead passed on to the other. This one could not restrain a groan, and was immediately stabbed.

The commonest mutilation was the gouging out of eyes; but the Turks went further, so that death happily supervened.

Their other practices, which cannot be detailed, meant death (the doctors told me) in two or three hours. I see no reason to doubt their occurrence, having witnessed what is much worse—women and girls mutilated by Turkish regulars.

The officer in charge of this hospital proved to be, like most others, a civilian turned soldier for the time. He was a lawyer, and also a well-known caricaturist of the Sofia press, and had many friends amongst the officers of the Staff. He was also an amateur photographer, and in the inadequate light of the early morning a group was taken with Savoff in the centre. The caricaturist was an agreeable illustration of the fact that the army was a nation in arms. A little later I was hailed by another Red Cross officer whom I had met in London. He had been secretary to the Bulgarian Legation, and was now seconded from diplomacy. At the same time the officer personally attached to me was a well-known owner of flour mills, and also a concessionnaire of the pine forest at Rilo.

Riding out of Tatarla we passed a transport convoy of record length. These convoys are the great feature of a transport route in the Balkans, as they would be in a war in India. There is not a farm in the combatant countries which has not sent its waggon and oxen to the front. These waggons are all of the same type—built almost entirely without metal, without springs, with wicker hood, mostly drawn by two grey bullocks, but sometimes by the even more complacent buffalo with his long tilted nose and his white eyes contentedly fixed on the sky. The pace is so slow that in the distance a convoy hardly appeared to move. It stretched across the valley before one and up the opposite hill, disappearing out of sight over the ridge like a vast and almost motionless snake. Such a convoy seemed symbolic of the stolid but irresistible mind of the people. The simple construction of the waggons and the very slowness of the beasts constitute a security against breakdown. The patience and endurance of the

oxen and of their drivers, who were commonly Turks from Bulgaria, were only harmonious with the unlimited number of waggons at the service of the State. At 300 yards the convoy looks like a succession of tortoises. Sometimes, as in this case at Tatarla, the same convoy whose rear one is passing may be continuous even for several miles. Though it disappears below the summit a mile off, it is the same entity which one can dimly perceive mounting the next ridge or the next after that. There is a sense that, however slow and however distant the goal, the convoy and the Bulgarian race will arrive.

It was less inspiring to meet the returning convoys. Riding close beside the waggons, one could see the feet of a wounded man swathed in the native fashion which he refuses to discard in favour of boots, and sometimes a pale and stolid face indicated the degree of endurance that was required to pass through the ordeal of this journey.

CONVOY CROSSING THE ARDA RIVER BY BRIDGE OF PONTOONS.

At mid-day we came to Yenije, on the main road from Adrianople to Kirk-lisse. We stopped here for lunch, and some of the older generals went on in motors. I had passed through Yenije after the insurrection of 1903, when the massacres had just taken place. The dead had been hurriedly buried. There is a wide sandy river, mostly bare, except in time of flood, and crossed by a long wooden bridge. The sandy bed is a convenient burial place. The bed of the river now served for interment of a different kind to that of 1903. At intervals, as we crossed the bridge, I saw the hoofs of a horse emerging from the sand where it had been hurriedly buried. Its position was thus conveniently marked, to avoid the labour of digging a second grave where the ground was already occupied. Little did I expect to see the open green of Yenije, where, nine years before, the surviving inhabitants slunk out of sight in terror, now occupied by a concourse of Christian troops. To-day a Bulgarian

trooper holds my horse while I lunch, where formerly I had begged the loan of a pony from a Turkish cavalryman.

Our surroundings now became doubly interesting. Our route was one of the few real roads in Turkey, and the Turks had considerately furnished it with a supply of excellent stone in readiness for remaking. This stone had been placed in long heaps at the side of the road, and constituted a ready-made trench for the fight which had preceded the fall of Kirklisse.

For several miles the south side of the road was lined with abandoned gun-carriages, dead horses, and here and there a corpse. One, half-buried in mud, was gashed in many places about the head. The Turks failed to hold the line of the road and fled south across open country. The soil here is heavy, and as it was wet weather some of the ruts made by the guns were at least eighteen inches deep. When the guns stuck fast the men cut loose enough horses for them-

CAPTURED TURKISH GUNS AT KIRKLISSE.

selves, threw away the firing-piece of the gun, shot the remaining horses, and rode away. There were commonly three carcases lying together, and dogs from the burned villages were then living on their half-putrid flesh. Broken carts lay in every direction. The ground was strewn with rifle cartridge, shrapnel, and heavy shell abandoned in the flight. Beyond Kirklisse, towards Bunarhissar, the banks by the road were in some places almost lined with unused shrapnel. The flight had been so hasty that streams of waggons and gun-carriages spread out by various tracks on each side of the road. Whole boxes of ammunition were continually thrown overboard, in the frantic endeavour to get the waggons through the mud. I must have seen at least thirty thousand unused gun-cartridges in a three hours' ride.

It was a thrilling experience for one who had visited Kirklisse in bygone years to enter it now with the victors.

Bulgarian reserve is attractive, but at the entry into Kirklisse it seemed excessive. It marked the climax of Bulgarian reticence when Savoff, avoiding all demonstration, hurried to Kirklisse in a closed car. Every house had hung out a flag, and the people crowded to their doors; but the whole Staff hastened, without apparent attention, up the steep, cobbled road, and dismounting at the Turkish Officers' Club betook ourselves to examining Turkish maps. The officers were chiefly concerned to find that the Turkish boundary was drawn to include Bulgaria.

In another hour a frugal supper was served in the very room from which Mahmud Mukhtar had fled in such haste that his Turkish sweetmeats were left behind. No notice was taken of the momentous significance of that repast; from generals to lieutenants the officers seemed embarrassed by any allusion to it.

The superficial appearance of the town, which I had visited in the Turkish

epoch (escorted and hampered by Turkish soldiers and officials) was by itself sufficient to indicate the liberation that had taken place. Every man had discarded with delight the red badge of servitude and adopted a European hat. A well-known Christian, who had been a member of the Turkish court of appeal, apologised suddenly, while talking to me, for wearing his hat. He had forgotten, he said, that it was a hat and not the irremovable fez.

The streets wore quite a changed aspect in another way. They had never before been full of women and girls. One could not forget that for every good-looking Christian woman, thanksgiving was due for the present freedom from danger.

It was not only happiness but virtue which suffered from Turkish rule ; and this becomes more than ever evident when the Christians are free to show themselves and express their views. The licentious habits of the Turks, which always degraded the general standard in regard to purity,

meant at war time the rape and disappearance of girls on an unprecedented scale.

The contrast with the old régime came home to us in the little town of Iskip, a noted centre of Greek education. Riding through it with a Bulgarian officer, and stopping to look at the church, we were soon surrounded by half the notables and population of the town. Several spoke French, and two, having been in America, had a smattering of English. They carried us off to the new club, which had been the first result of the liberation. Though the tide of war had not passed, and no civil government had been established, they had installed themselves, established a library of books (previously concealed), and were delighted to entertain us in the reading-room, where a show of civilisation was already made by some Greek newspapers of ancient date.

Acts of revenge upon the Turks seemed, in the towns which we visited, singularly few. At Lule Burgas one ruin is con-

spicuous. It is the charred remains of the house of a notorious scoundrel who, under the protection of the governor, carried on robbery and rape after the fashion of the notorious Fehim Pasha, whose atrocities led the European embassies some years ago to demand his banishment from Constantinople. If revenge had been more brutal, the mutilations, burnings, massacres, and woundings, which in the past have disgraced the Turkish empire, would have formed an excuse. It has been for years past an unpleasant duty to drag them into public notice in order to draw the necessary political conclusion. It is one of the chief sources of satisfaction to-day that the time is approaching when they may be forgotten.

The rooms of the Turkish club were at once turned to account as offices. Connecting them was a large upper hall, and here some forty officers sat down to supper, Savoff and Ficheff presiding together. There is a massive quality about Savoff which defies description:

the head large; the figure not disproportionate, and yet a short man; genial, yet apart, with an air of large condescension; potentially social, but preoccupied: a man to inspire confidence. He reminded me of nothing so much as that rare type of Englishman, born a squire but by nature a leader of men, occupied with great affairs, but when at home joining the crowd of commonplace people, shooting or hunting or golfing, without claiming special regard.

Ficheff's bright eyes conceal a reserve impenetrable even for a Bulgar; but on one subject he opens out—the wrongs of a people worthy of freedom, the five centuries of suffering, the deserted land. The outwitting of the Turks delighted him; the superb quality of the army surprised even him. There was news that night. The holy war had been declared. The green flag waved at Chatalja. For once the stir of feeling found expression.

We sat smoking late, enjoying the thought of liberation. The Balkan mother

GENERAL SAVOFF AT A FIELD TELEPHONE STATION.

would sing to her child in peace; and girls would be merry without fear. The blight that had lain on the Balkan lands was healed, the fog dispelled. Even the prestige of military despotism was gone like a pricked bubble. The tyranny that rested on delusion and not on power was vanished like an empty nightmare that fades when the sleeper wakes. The establishment of Europe's freedom was fulfilled; the final step taken. A great and notable nation had obtained recognition through the war. Its persistence, its purpose, its deep reserve, now stood revealed, added to the world's stores of national character.

For centuries the Bulgarian refused to compromise with the Turk. Other nations sought to lighten the weight of the yoke by taking service with the tyrant or bowing the head. The maxim 'The sword never strikes when the head is bowed' undermined the soul of other nations, never of this. Influence and wealth went to others; all seemed lost by the policy of defiance. Bulgarians

would not balance advantages. A kind of faith made them ready to pay even death for ultimate gain. The spirit wins at last ; and the indomitable spirit of the Bulgars has come by its just reward.

Here was a chance to realise the glory of war, to view it as a blessing. All the sense of common aim, of national unity, of readiness to die for others, of mighty movements and forces, thrilled together in the blood. Here was a display of superiority to matter that might well fill a crudely puritan mind with deep religious idealism. Here was a healthy military world in which everyone worked hard, and each filled his appropriate place ; where drones, fops, wasters could not exist ; where rewards and comforts were appropriate to deserts. Here in a healthy, frugal, outdoor life the primitive instincts of the struggling race of men swept aside all feeling but that of energy and well-being, and inspired an unreasoning conviction that war is good.

MACEDONIAN PEASANTS ENROLLED IN THE BULGARIAN ARMY.

And out there, under the frosty sky, lay the battered corpses, trodden on, rolled in the mud; viewed in times of peace by men in their senses with reverence unfeigned, and now regarded with much less respect than a dead rat by an English roadside.

II.—THE PRICE

CHAPTER II

THE BATTLE-FIELDS

A FEW days after the great battle, and before the trenches, the débris, or even the dead had disappeared, we obtained facilities for riding over the field. For fifty miles south and east of Kirklisse the country is uniform to a degree which I have never seen elsewhere. It is a vast slope of clay soil cut by rainfall into curiously parallel and uniform valleys and rivers, running north and south. One of the deepest of these valleys holds at its lower end, where the little river debouches on the plain, the town of Lule Burgas. It was the slope overlooking the river toward the west which was chosen by Abdullah Pasha for

the battle. It was an unrivalled defensive ground, some twenty-five miles long, but it involved leaving the town of Lule Burgas in front of the lines. At the south end, therefore, the line of defence was broken, so as to protect the town, by placing troops on the ridge beyond it. This section formed an isolated outpost to the west of the valley. It was worth holding to avoid the abandoning of the town, but also because, as an attack position for the Bulgars, it would be of priceless value, sloping steeply towards the east, commanding the valley and an immense area, including the railway station four miles further south.

Here on the ridge were the most interesting remains of the fight. The sight of trenches is always thrilling; they are the very framework of momentous human efforts, and of actions in which the play of thought or nerve or courage changes the course of human history. The scene on these ridges was peculiarly suggestive. There were Turkish trenches looking west, mixed with Bulgar trenches looking east; the

same ridge had served to defend Asiatic government and to advance European ideals. The two were symbolised in the very digging of the trench. First had come the Turks, and in careless fashion dug slight holes, sometimes joined together so as to justify the name of trench, but sometimes mere isolated depressions, with the soil actually thrown all round the hole, as if the digger had begun to plant a tree. Often we found semi-circular trenches forming a kind of miniature fortress. I have met no one who could explain the object that the diggers of these may have thought they had in view. Certainly many of the men must have had the vaguest idea of the purpose for which they dug. The poor redif's work was typical. I have been assured by Europeans on the Turkish side that men in the reserves were seen on the eve of battle receiving cartridge for the first time in their lives, having had no explanation of a rifle whatever, and actually trying to see if the cartridge would fit into the muzzle.

IN A TRENCH WHILE UNDER FIRE AT CHATALJA.

True or not, the fact would not be more remarkable than the inability of many Turkish officers either to read or write. The Asiatic mind has always been a puzzle, especially that of the Turk. What is not to his interest, that he will do. On the battle-field, with personal and national safety hanging on his alert attention, he spends time in mutilating a wounded enemy. He wastes cartridge, before the fight, in shooting women and children. Sometimes, when succoured by the enemy's doctor, the wounded Turk turns and kills him. Could human psychology reach a more extreme form of crookedness ?

Here, in the futile spade-scratches, that would not have sheltered a dog, the muddle and disorder of the Turk stood symbolised. Other defects have wrought his ruin as well—the spirit of ascendancy, fatalism, and inhumanity. These have formed the main ground for his expulsion from Europe. They are allied to disorder ; and it was fitting that in the final duel for power the Turk should lose by bad

trenches, bad transport, and disorder in the ranks—by distrust of the officers, and doubts as to whether the new 'Committeemen' respected the Sultan or upheld the Koran.

The Bulgarian trenches, on the other hand, were distinguished not only by their workmanship, but by their extraordinary number. Certain it is that the great agricultural tradition of the Bulgars served them in good stead. They like work, and, above all, the Bulgarian is a gardener. His maxim in battle is like that of the old Scotch laird, whose advice, when nothing else could be done, was 'to be aye planting a tree.' When he is not firing or charging, the Bulgarian soldier is always digging a trench. By the side of Turkish incompetence, the different outlook of the European was graphically presented. His trenches, commanding the great expanse, were neatly finished, sometimes as big as a Norfolk bank, with the breaks, to prevent an enfilading fire, regularly and neatly finished.

The position was an ideal one, even

for several lines of simultaneous firing, and at one point I counted no fewer than five trenches arranged in gallery fashion. From here the shooting was at long range, very different from the short-range shooting at Adrianople. There, as guest of the Servian general, I met officers returning from their twenty-four hours in the trenches. They described how the chief trouble was to keep still. If one stirred, one's head showed above the bank, and the Turkish sharpshooters, only 300 yards off, were dangerously good shots.

To return to the hill above Lule Burgas. Behind its crest stood the Bulgarian field guns. Their position was marked by finely built emplacements, outside of which lay, in some cases, over a hundred spent shrapnel cartridge. They reminded me of nothing so much as a grouse butt after a successful drive, multiplied tenfold in size.

Lule Burgas station is about four miles from this point. As the Bulgarian guns came into action, a train was starting which had stayed in the station till too

late for its original purpose. It was intended to carry the women of the Turkish garrison, and was already filled with flying non-combatants. But, seizing the opportunity of more rapid escape, soldiers also boarded the train, and, to make room for themselves, threw out many of the women before the train started. The Bulgarian guns opened fire from the hills above and, getting the range, bombarded successfully the two engines which drew the train. It was derailed, and the wreckage resulting from this gruesome incident still lay by the line ten days later.

We now rode along the line of the main Turkish position, north-east of the town. It was a balmy and sunny day, and the pleasure of riding over the open country was in tragic contrast to the thought of the sights and sounds which had occupied it so shortly before. The young wheat-patches were already turning green, and flocks of larks gave a feeling of England in spring. But the long parallel lines of trenches exposed at

BULGARIAN CREUSOT GUN AND EMPLACEMENT.

intervals on the rounded hills served to conjure up a picture of the great struggle for which the place will ever be famous.

At some points the Turkish trenches were lined with cartridge; the men in many cases must have fired two hundred at a sitting. In the Bulgarian trenches, on the other hand, wherever I saw them, it was quite difficult to find a cartridge. I asked several officers about this paucity of cartridge in the Bulgarian lines. The explanation which I generally got was the great number of trenches. Many of them are merely provisional, some are made by the second line, and both of these classes may never be used for firing. Another explanation is that at manœuvres the Bulgars are rigidly taught to pick up empty cartridge (for economy), and many had done this from force of habit even in battle. But it is also a complaint of the Bulgarian Staff that the men are too unwilling to shoot. Until the attack on Chatalja less

than ten million rifle cartridge were used. If the army had used only one hundred rounds per man per day, in the five days' fighting at Lule Burgas the consumption would have approached fifty million, in that one battle alone.

The men's eagerness for the bayonet amounted almost to insubordination, and led to serious mishaps, though it was, no doubt, in the main, a decisive factor in creating the original panic among the Turks which made the turning-point of the war. I often asked the wounded whether there were any bayonet wounds among them. They invariably replied with eagerness that the Turks would never let them get near enough. Their contempt of the Turks prevailed over their desire to show that they had beaten a valiant enemy. It is said that on only one occasion did the Turks stand by their trenches. This was at a village east of Bunarhissar, where the Bulgarians were four times driven back and four times re-took the position. I was often told by the wounded

and officers the following story: The fear of the bayonet was always great, but its terror was increased by the adroitness of the Christians in the Turkish ranks. The order to 'fix bayonets' is, in Bulgarian, 'Na pret, na nosh.' The Turks heard the words across the intervening three hundred yards, and asked the Christians what they meant. The sound it suggested to the Christians was the words 'Pet; na nosh'; 'Pet' means 'five,' and it occurred to the Christians to tell the Turks that the order meant 'five on each bayonet.'

We noticed at first the absence of graves, but the explanation was soon evident. The trenches served as ready-made tombs. The work of burial had been heavy, and it was convenient to have no more to do than drag the bodies to the trench and shovel the bank upon them. Sometimes a foot protruded from the soil, sometimes a face, and once we came on a more gruesome spectacle. The land is heavy, and holds water at

many points. After the battle, when many of the dead lay crouched in the trenches, heavy rain fell; the trench remained full of water, covering the corpses. When the burial parties came round it was evidently tempting to regard the work of burial in these cases as sufficiently done. As we rode along a trench we sometimes came to a point where the water had fallen by a few inches and left exposed a head, bent sadly downwards, with the little red wound in the short hair.

The Balkan frogs had already found these newly-provided watering-places, and were appreciating the advantages of war; so also were the lizards, which, where a body or a soldier's coat lay on the open field, were quick to scurry under it for shelter as we passed. Eagles and ravens also were feeding on the bodies of the killed, and had come scores of miles from the hills, which they are generally reluctant to leave.

A little further, the Bulgarian guns

A BULGARIAN BURIAL PARTY.

had got the range of a regiment in retreat. The ground within a circle of a hundred yards radius showed at least fifty marks of shell. In the soft clay each had dug a hole almost big enough for a child's grave. A great deal of common shell had been used here, the irregular segments (intended to fly apart) being embedded in masses in the earth, several sticking together. Sometimes, judging by the number of bullets spread in the soil only a few inches apart, the shrapnel must have burst quite close to the ground; or perhaps these were marks of 'percussion shrapnel.' Here the dead had lain far from the trenches, and had been buried one by one, or in small numbers together. The field was haunted by occasional dogs, who slunk away on our approach. Sometimes the shallow grave had served only to preserve the human flesh for the dogs to eat when horses were finished. At one point a pale face loomed from the brown soil, the hands crossed on the chest, as those of a sick

man arranged by a nurse for sleep: a strong, young face with ruddy moustache and hair, gazing at the blue sky with an aspect of peace.

War blunts the sense of sympathy and of the value of life, which grows with order and civilisation, but the suffering of beasts recalled the feelings of normal life. The guns on the Turkish side had in some cases admirable positions. In one place, where perhaps a German officer was in charge, they were not only behind the crest of the hill but a long way below it, in an almost hollow place. Here they were entirely out of sight of the Bulgarian gunners. But guns on the other side of the valley had timed their shrapnel right, and three horses of a battery had here been hit. There was nothing in three dead horses to excite interest, but a curious mark in the ground by a dead horse's fore foot attracted my attention. There was an exact half circle of raised soil, and thinking that it might record some mechanism

for dealing with the recoil or other interesting feature of the gun, I cantered across to examine it. The explanation was very different. The horse, after being shot, had been unable to rise—perhaps his back was broken—and in struggling to get on to his feet he had scored the ground with a sweeping motion, almost from the nose to the hind leg. The poor beast must have been pawing there for hours together, so deep a trench had been dug by his hoof.

The chief feature of Turkish preparation was not the absence of ammunition or even food; it was rather the vast extent of their stores combined with the total failure to place them where wanted. Part of the army starved; another part was well fed. It is a striking feature of the Turkish positions that traces of camps and cooking were as conspicuous by their presence as, on the Bulgarian side, by their absence. I frequently saw large areas covered by

camp kitchens, and littered with the heads and remains of sheep. The Bulgars, on the other hand, lived on bread, and sometimes little of that. Even in the case of the troopers acting as our personal servants, their officer deprecated our supplementing in any way their daily loaf.

The oddest feature of the Turkish camps was the vast quantity of clothing, linen, and padded quilts whch they threw away. No doubt Asiatics required more protection from the cold than the Balkan native, but wherever quilts had been distributed from the regimental transport and used for the night, there to all appearance they remained. What was the history of the innumerable linen shirts also left upon the ground no ingenuity could discover. They cannot all have been looted from the villages. The Greeks in Lule Burgas described the Turkish soldiers flying through the town as throwing away every garment which impeded them, and their officers themselves as clothed with hardly more than a

THE ONLY RAILWAY BRIDGE DESTROYED BY THE RETREATING TURKS.

shirt. From the incredible litter of underclothing left in the camps just before the flight through the town it would appear strange that even a shirt was left on their backs.

Waste of equipment was further illustrated by two unused aeroplanes, one German, the other English. They were damaged in the wings and rudders, but no definite steps seemed to have been taken for the set purpose of making them useless. They had probably been spoilt by neglect, after the manner of Turkish warships. The costly machines were typical of Turkish waste. A great feature of the war has been the abandonment of immense stores, frequently including items which could only be classed as luxuries. The Bulgarians were astonished to see what money had been spent, e.g. on metal tent-pegs and fastenings, such as they are accustomed to cut for themselves. Money had been poured out on the extravagances of military material. Not

content with flying machines, which no living Turk could manipulate, the Turks had bought costly motor ambulances, for which no employment was ever found. One of these was in use by the Bulgarians before I left Kirklisse. It was as if the manufacturers in Germany and army agents in Turkey had conspired to spend the maximum of money, and had imposed on the unfortunate taxpayer the cost of any article which could, by the smallest excuse, be described as military equipment.

But what was most strange was the reckless abandonment of ammunition. There seemed to be a positive mania for throwing away unused cartridge. I could certainly have picked up hundreds of the familiar clips holding five unused cartridges apiece. Sometimes the cartridges lay singly, which is even more puzzling, because they would need to be pulled from the clips separately. The most astonishing spectacle of this kind was on the road from Kirklisse to Bunar-

hissar. This had been the main line of flight. In the desperate attempt to get away, the road had been blocked with ox-waggons, guns, and gun-carriages. For more than a mile it runs round the side of a hill, where no vehicle could spread out to right or left. Many were overturned down the bank, and dead oxen lay there when I passed. Beyond the bridge, where the land gets flatter, the wild panic spread across unploughed land. The winding tracks through the low scrub were deeply rutted, and everywhere, both on the road and off it, was shrapnel shell, in caissons holding over forty, in boxes by the score, big boxes, small boxes, and, strangest of all, lying singly, as if the driver on his caisson picked them one by one from their pigeon-holes, in mad haste to lighten the load and let the beasts get ahead of some other fugitive. Such a whirlwind of human fear, such an accumulated agony of over-driven beasts must have been present along that road, as would suffice to furnish hell.

It is a marvel that after that mental breakdown the army stood its ground at Lule Burgas and at many points fought so well that victory hung in the balance. The great battle lasted from November 28 to December 2, and on the third day its fate was still uncertain. Desperate measures were required, and a certain Bulgarian general was told that by such a time the next day such a position must be taken at all costs. He proceeded to ride with his whole staff in front of the line —thus breaking rules with which even I, as an ex-volunteer field officer, was familiar. His horse was shot under him in the river, and one of the staff was killed. But the men, with the extra enthusiasm added to their normal *élan*, were irresistible; the position was taken within a few hours. The general, who had been expected about noon next day to report the result of his desperate attempt, walked quietly into headquarters the same evening, and with Bulgarian frigidity reported the position captured.

Following the Turkish lines northwards for some miles, we crossed the field to explore the Bulgarian position, and stopped for lunch at Turk Bey. We opened our tins of potted meat in a pretty hollow, where the mulberry trees shaded a field of vines. The leaves were falling in the sunshine after the frosty night, and covered the ground. We sat down, but found our seat surprisingly hard; the reason was peculiar; the ground under the fallen leaves was thick with cartridge. Feeling sociable after lunch, we walked into the village. An old Greek peasant delighted me with his attempts to carry on conversation. My vocabulary permitted my asking where were the Turks. I have seldom seen a human being look happier than that good-looking old man, when he pointed to the south-east, and laughed with profound delight.

Our next move was to the army at the front. A military train crawled uncomfortably through the open valley of the

Ergene river, hitherto associated by so many of us with the luxury of the Orient express.

Just east of Lule Burgas the train ran through an incredible litter of cart-wheels and caissons, and past the wreckage of engines and railway carriages bombarded as the battle closed. Here occurred the desperate stampede, the miserable struggle of troops and refugees to Constantinople. There was little more fighting except rear-guard actions; the Bulgars were tired, and had out-run their transport. The roads were worse than ever after Sarai, where the ground becomes hilly and wooded with oak scrub. At times the gun-carriages could not pass, and the guns were carried by the hands of men. Fever had broken out already among the retreating Turks; the Bulgarian army arrived at Chatalja both exhausted and sick. But the fate of the Turks in Europe was sealed. Barbarity to peaceful villagers was avenged. Europe was finally freed.

TURKISH RAILWAY CARRIAGE, IN WHICH THE ARMISTICE WAS SIGNED.

SHELTER FROM SHELL FIRE.

My brother and I reached Chorlu on November 12. Here were the headquarters of the cavalry division attached to the two armies, which had now joined together under the command of General Dimitrieff, with Colonel Jostoff for chief of the Staff. General Nazlamoff, who commands the cavalry, kindly invited us and the lieutenant accompanying us to share his quarters. It was a pleasant party in a clean Greek house. The general and I had friends in common in the British army. He was tickled by the views of a Turkish member of Parliament whom I had found travelling out in the Orient express. The Oriental M.P. held, even after the battle of Lule Burgas, that all the retirements of the Turkish army had been part of a strategic plan. It was their intention thus to entrap the enemy. 'Yes,' said Nazlamoff, 'it was just like a Turkish plan, to leave behind their food, guns, ammunition, all the railway bridges undestroyed, and to get behind the Chatalja forts.'

At Chorlu station was the one piece of

effective destruction to the railway which I saw. None of the bridges were broken, but a picturesque object existed in the railway water tank, which had been exploded with a bomb. The station pump, however, supplied the deficiency, a line of men handing buckets along from the pump to the engine, so that the ingenuity of the Turks only delayed us some half an hour. The rear-guard action, which handed over Chorlu to the invaders, lasted only two or three hours, but there must have been sharp fighting round the station. Dead horses were too numerous for comfort, and the railway track itself was littered with cartridge. The whole neighbourhood was, as was usual where the Turks had been, whitened with printed Turkish paper. The army and the refugees had left the precincts foul beyond description. We arrived about sunset, and it was dark before the truck in which were our horses could be brought alongside the dock. Our train, loaded with bread, horses, cartridge, and troops, came to rest. Red Cross men

GENERAL NAZLAMOFF AT CAVALRY HEADQUARTERS AT CHORLU.

began to appear, ominously gathering for the coming carnage. Around us was a scene of filth and disorder. Dead horses lay by the station wall, gnawed by dogs, the skin torn off. A vile smell of ordure arose from the camp ground. We waited patiently for our horses, while the stench grew with the stiller air of evening. The exploded water tank loomed crooked against the sky. From the direction of Rhodosto came the growl of guns from the Turkish ships, vainly trying to prevent the Bulgarian entry. The incongruity of war—engines on the one hand jostling elementary disorder on the other—came home to the mind with the finer perceptions induced by twilight. Over all the abominations of sight and sound and smell, a pink and gorgeous sunset seemed to smile at the pathos of man's wasted opportunities, to point out the egregious folly of humanity in a temper.

CHAPTER III

THE WOUNDED

Our main concern on returning from the front was as to the arrival of the English Red Cross contingents. The fight at Chatalja was actually in progress, and the flood of wounded loomed before us as an overwhelming emergency for which in any case preparations could not be complete. We had on reaching Sofia, three weeks before, pleaded that the medical units of the Balkan War Relief Fund had a claim to favoured treatment, associated as they were with organised workers for the Balkan cause. We urged that they must not, like all the other foreign medical contingents at that time, be detained at the capital, or even at the intermediate hospitals near the Turkish frontier. The

Russians alone, as relatives and patrons of Bulgaria, had obtained leave to work in the zone of war. The English were allowed to join them, and their arrival was anxiously awaited.

The Russian Red Cross unit had arrived a week before, with magnificent equipment. Its splendours were notorious. It had required the services of no fewer than 225 ox-waggons to bring it to the front. The large Turkish barracks, a mile from the town, supplied the only possible building for its installation; but the Turks had left them in a condition unfit for a stable. Many days had to elapse before the equipment could be even unpacked. One of the two blocks allotted was at last cleansed. In the upper floor lay 200 wounded, in their blood-clotted uniforms, almost untended, mostly on the floor. Six had died the previous night. The staff were engrossed in preparations for work on modern lines. The doctor in charge protested against the Bulgarian authorities who had sent in wounded before he was ready. Nine

days later the hospital was beautifully equipped.

The British Red Cross units undertook one of the blocks of barracks adjoining those occupied by the Russians. Their first task was to clean out the indescribable accumulation of filth of which a Turkish barrack consists. A strange spectacle presented itself when I first called on Major Birrell, the commandant of the two units respectively of the Sussex Red Cross Society and the Balkan War Relief Fund. With Turkish unaccountableness, the greatest accumulation of rubbish was in the top storey, and from the attic window in the gable of the long building descended a continuous stream of unsavoury dirt, hurled therefrom by the long-suffering orderlies of the unit. Sanitary provision had been nil. The surrounding land, close to the operating-room of what had been the Turkish military hospital, gave forth an effluvia sufficient to counteract the most perfect antiseptic precautions. Whatever else the British accomplished, they educated

RUSSIAN RED CROSS CONTINGENT.

the local mind to think about sanitation. Their model provisions for keeping a camp clean were installed in the quagmire of filth some fifty yards from the building. The gangway to them was marked out in white stones, and what had been a horror to the nose and a danger to the wounded became an example which edified while it amused.

The long rooms of the barrack quickly assumed the aspect of hospital wards in London, with ample space and an air of calm. With six doctors and an operating-room, the patients had every chance that skilled attention could give.

Across the road the former military hospital of the Turks held 500 wounded. It was in the charge of one Bulgarian doctor. Foreign contingents struggled to maintain Western standards of bed space, though these had been abandoned even at the model hospital organised by the Queen. The army medical authorities found the overcrowding in their own hospitals and shelters all the more intense, and talked of the better use

which they could have made of the buildings taken as a whole. But this was partly due to their own defective organisation. The work of forwarding convalescents to hospitals nearer home was not kept up to date, and the new arrivals were not efficiently classified. The function of the foreign units, with their ample staff of doctors and medical equipment was, clearly, to deal with the severer cases, but frequently when a train-load of wounded arrived, cases less severe were allowed to get into foreign hospitals and there occupy space. This made it less likely that foreign units would stretch a point to adapt themselves to the views of the local authorities. Undoubtedly the latter would have benefited vastly by an offer of work from individual foreign doctors with a knowledge of French or German. A sympathetic adaptability of nature, with an interest in the general end in view, would be quite sufficient to make such a system agreeable to both parties. Where

500 men depended on one doctor (partly occupied also as general supervisor of the hospitals in the town), the work of one extra doctor working with him would have accomplished many times more than it produced in conjunction with an ample staff treating small numbers of the wounded. The space, attention, time, and equipment devoted to each case in some of the foreign hospitals seemed inappropriate to the general pressure. The army authorities rightly desired to adapt the total means available to the total problem to be dealt with. Many unsuitable buildings in the town—private houses, Turkish and Greek schools—had to be hurriedly fitted with military beds or with palliasses on the floor, and not only were these over-full, but the very passages were crowded with wounded men who could find no other space.

In this situation it appeared to the amateur onlooker that the finest service rendered by any foreign unit was that of the English unit known as the Women's

Convoy Corps. The Red Cross Society of Great Britain had announced in *The Times* that women were out of place in the Balkan War, and that they were not responsible for the women who undertook work. But to anyone who had seen in the Balkan hospitals the immense and indispensable part being played by women, it seemed a needless penance for the British units that they should confine themselves to male society. It was, therefore, consoling to find when they arrived at Kirklisse that they had been supplied at Sofia with the services (as interpreters) of two Bulgarian young ladies, without whom they could not have accomplished the journey efficiently or made their arrangements with the authorities, and the advantages of whose company they were very naturally inclined to recognise. Mrs. Stobart, the commandante of the Convoy Corps, seeing the notice in *The Times* deprecating the employment of women, paid a visit to the scene of war before deciding that it was a place where

ladies could work. A mere man would perhaps have considered the hardships too great; but the corps was summoned by telegram. Mrs. Stobart and her three doctors, her nurses, orderlies, dressers, and cooks endured several days of travel in the Balkan bullock-waggons, which have no further covering than wicker hoods. In these they slept at night without even the luxury of straw, after the scanty stock had been used to feed the bullocks, to relieve the hardness of the waggon-boards. I should not have thought it possible that women (or at all events men), many of them accustomed to luxury, would survive this experience without breakdown, but there was not a word of complaint. No sooner had they arrived in Kirklisse (to find that in the confusion no preparation had been made for their arrival) than they attacked, without a moment's delay, the labour of cleansing and disinfecting the filthy houses assigned to them; unpacking their equipment; and creating in the back yard some tolerable conditions

of sanitation. Though tired out, their only anxiety had been that they would arrive too late to cope with the main burden of the Chatalja wounded.

Next day I reported to them the crush which prevailed in the treatment-room of the Bulgarian hospital. They immediately undertook this extra 'out-patient' task, although most of their equipment was still unpacked. In the first two days they had thus treated 131 cases. To contribute a maximum of help to the army medical department of a small and undeveloped State such as we were sent to assist, required a high degree of sympathy, enthusiasm for the end, freedom from professionalism, and a total indifference to personal discomfort. These qualities were displayed by the Convoy Corps in a degree which I should have thought it impossible to realise.

If any criticism of the Convoy Corps were admissible, it might be urged that they carried good nature to a dangerous point. Two days only after their arrival,

when they had already accomplished an easy record in getting a hospital ready, they sat down to a most inadequate supper; all of them, I should say, in danger of breakdown from the excessive work of starting the hospital without time to prepare their equipment. We had hardly attacked the corned beef which was to form the meal when it was announced that some twenty ox-waggons filled with wounded had arrived in the darkness at the house, sent by the authorities. I recognised the ordinary attempt to take advantage of good-natured people and avoid the trouble of arranging matters in one of the Bulgarian hospitals, but argument failed to outweigh the energy and sense of duty of the women pioneers. Supper was at once abandoned, and the next few hours were spent in arduous labour. The wounded were carried one by one out of the waggons; straw mattresses and beds were hastily prepared. There were not beds enough, and in one of the downstair rooms six of

the men were laid on litter. It was not long before soup also made its appearance. Most of the men were badly wounded ; a few were sick. One poor wretch, tortured with rheumatism, spoke fluent French, having been a waiter at Sofia. He described how the troops had to stand in the trenches with water to the waist.

As agent for the Balkan War Relief Fund I was specially fortunate to secure the services of the Convoy Corps with no more expense than the cost of their travel, they and their friends supplying the rest.

They placed the supporters of the Fund under a deep debt of gratitude. They represented exactly that adaptability of spirit, that understanding of foreign needs and foreign languages, without which half the value of the costly efforts of the Red Cross Society in Continental wars may be lost.

I hesitate to state fully what I saw of the wounded in the Balkan War. We dislike horrors, and we dislike the people who have a taste for them. The ugly

facts in normal life we agree not to speak of. There grows up a feeling that to tell painful truths of any kind shows bad taste. Thus reform is neglected. I have for years felt the difficulty in regard to atrocious features incidental to Turkish government. Their recital might move the sympathetic to action ; but we fear to incur the charge of bad form. The man who has seen war is in the same dilemma.

What is the distinction between horrors to tell and horrors to conceal ? It lies surely in the difference between evils removable and irremovable. If war and neglect of wounds are a fixed quantity, the less said the better. Let us leave Zola's ' La Débâcle ' to the prurient and the idle. But clearly the diminution of pain in war has been one of the aims most unanimously pursued by modern Europe. Geneva Conventions and diplomacy itself have even dealt with the pain of injured horses. And now the whole question of the utility of war itself is on the table. The problem is

vital, and for its solution it is essential to know the facts. But how are we to know them? It is rare, and becoming rarer, that they are seen by any but the professional men employed and engrossed in the work. The lay onlooker is excluded more and more from military operations. The professional is debarred from writing; he is committed, also, quite naturally, to a partial and uncritical view. So much the more, I conclude, is the amateur, whose rare fortune it is to see war, bound to state the cold truth as he saw it, and leave his hearers to judge of it as they choose.

In the base hospitals one found that vast section of the wounded which might be called hopeful. From the original harvest of the battle-field, collected at first in open-air bivouacs which foreign army medical corps call *lazarettes*, had been eliminated, first, those who died before treatment; next, those who died under the surgeon's knife; then those

too severely injured to be moved from the *hôpitaux de champ*. From these tent-hospitals, admirably designed and served each by a staff numbering over a hundred men, the process of evacuation was continually hastened by the arrival of fresh cases for whom no room could be found. Their predecessors, with wounds hastily sterilised and bandaged, were thrust out perforce upon the long journey homewards. The waggons which had brought ammunition or bread to the front never went back empty. Broken men, who needed to be nursed quietly in bed for many weeks, were crowded into every one. Some could climb into the waggon, most needed stretchers; a few could walk. To most the jolting in these springless carts must have meant extreme pain. It was evident in the white and drawn faces that one perceived beneath the waggon hoods in endless succession as one rode towards the front along the returning stream. The men marching out and the mangled carried home, recalled

those vast machines in the slaughter-houses of Chicago, where the cattle go forward in endless line, and are carried back dismembered.

From Lule Burgas the pitiless journey into Bulgaria took eight days. For the Chatalja fight the Turkish railway could be used, and the strain was less terrible; Kirklisse took the place of Yamboli as the first intermediate base; and those who could find room in the daily train arrived from the front in one day, or two. But even so many died on the route.

It will be realised that the army of invalids who reached the final base at Sofia or Belgrade was a highly selected one. Yet even these, which I have called by comparison 'hopeful,' often arrived only just in time to die. Established at last in a bed and bed-clothes, their names were posted at the hospital door, the first and only announcement of the casualty.

In Belgrade, as we passed in at the door, I saw women crowding to read

the list. In the ward a well-known Servian lady, turned nurse for the time, in white cap and apron with the red cross on the chest, explained that work was impeded by crowding; there were so many relatives come to see the wounded, dead or dying. On one side of us lay a corpse, quite unscreened. Next bed but one to this, an old man held his dying son's hand. In the bed opposite lay a man with ashy grey face. He was, the nurse said, just dying. Relatives were summoned, when possible, before the death. If not, the nurses took down the last message to wife or child. It was tiresome that the message took long to give—the men spoke so slowly. As we passed down the ward, the old man got up to leave; his son's breathing had stopped.

At Chorlu, where the cavalry section of the Chatalja army was quartered, field hospitals were gathering for the carnage. They had turned to account an empty Turkish house and installed the wounded

from the battle in which Chorlu was taken. The doctor, who spoke good English, asked me to go the rounds. The cases needing dressing were afterwards brought down on stretchers.

The first, a Turk, had the right eye destroyed. The bullet had passed on behind the nose and lodged near the left ear. Gifted happily with a low organism, the man seemed stupefied to pain.

A trooper, whose rifle had burst in his face, was dreadfully disfigured. The doctor, one of the most humane, tore the bandage sharply off. The man screamed. The doctor held strongly that only so could the wounds be thoroughly inspected. The man's coat was drenched with suppurating matter—a servant was sent to mop it up. But this was one of the least important cases.

The next had no fewer than eleven wound-marks. Three bullets had gone through the shoulder and two through the arm, making ten holes. One bullet had touched the lung. There was also

a shrapnel mark grazing the forearm. This was not a record. At Belgrade a man had five shrapnel balls (much more serious things than rifle bullets) embedded in him. Another had fourteen wounds from one percussion shell.

Often the tiny pointed bullet of the Turkish Mauser left, after a week, no more mark than a bug-bite. Its praises as a factor *tout à fait humanitaire* were in every Bulgarian's mouth. Many men, hating to stop fighting, were perforated three times before they confessed a wound. The bullet cauterised its own track.

The desire to fight again was vehement among the wounded from Lule Burgas, less so of course from Chatalja, where sickness was in the air. A doctor, performing a desperate operation after the former, could catch the man's habitual thought reflected by the sub-conscious mind. Just before death he muttered, 'Get me well to fight at Chatalja.'

In some cases men were blinded by shell-explosions. Blinding seemed to stupefy

the mind. A man so injured said to the doctor, 'The flour has got into my eyes and the mice are eating it.'

The majority of infantrymen were hit in the left arm or hand, as it was lifted for firing. Shrapnel balls (coming from above) often struck the shoulders, back, and legs. We saw many men pierced through the lungs. An officer rode six miles shot just below the heart.

Stomach wounds were ominously few. They were, the doctors said, nearly always fatal.

At Philippopolis the Queen had installed the hospital which she had controlled in the Manchurian war. Its head, Dr. Michaelovski, had some interesting cases, of which the one most fit for publication was that of a deep wound in the brain. Trepanning, on the left side, had left the man completely paralysed on the right, except as to the eye.

At Kirklisse, about November 22, military trains filled with wounded were arriving daily, often long after dark.

UNDERGROUND SHELTER FOR BESIEGING TROOPS.

They had only had one treatment about a week before we received them. There was no ambulance train. Some travelled in open trucks. Serious operations had not been possible at the front, for practically all Bulgarian doctors were occupied in the field hospitals attached to each division and with the *lazarettes* on the field of battle.

My brother and I found that in the Bulgarian hospital an intolerable situation existed. The number of men needing to have their wounds dressed was far greater than could be kept pace with. There were no means of supplying them with fresh clothing, and scores lay about the floor of the improvised building, packed so close that for some days they overflowed into the streets. Those who could walk, and needed treatment, struggled in a dense mass at the door of the surgery awaiting their turn. The provision for dealing with this emergency consisted of five dressers, some of whom had no more experience than myself. The doctor in charge took advantage of our visit of inspection, and

begged my brother and myself to join in the work.

These crowded treatment-rooms were a feature of many Bulgarian hospitals. Work was largely done by untrained ladies of the place: in fact, the whole leisured womanhood was working for the wounded, while the whole manhood of the country was at the front. In one room I saw a girl of fifteen plugging a large hole made by a shrapnel ball in the back of a soldier. Close by was a man wincing under the pain of the dressing of an ugly wound on the arm, but his spirits were equal to the occasion. 'It makes me dance,' he said; 'we enjoy all sorts of dancing now.'

No anæsthetics were used, not even cocaine. The Balkan soldier sometimes, as is notorious, seems stolidly indifferent to pain; but his sensitiveness, I should say, was in most cases very great. It is met, however, by extreme fortitude. They apparently prefer to have serious operations without anæsthetics. They are terrified of losing a limb. I heard

AWAITING AMPUTATION.

one man say to the doctor who was preparing to take off his gangrenous arm, 'Please kill me rather than take off my arm. If I can't work on my farm, I would rather be dead.' They distrust the doctor, and endure the utmost agony, so hoping to minimise the amputation.

We worked in a room some twenty feet square, devoted all day to eight simultaneous treatments, each of which should have had a room and antiseptic apparatus to itself.

It was the class-room of an old Turkish school, and between its two low windows the teacher's platform, under the Sultan's monogram (which no one had had time to pull down), further reduced the space. Except for those nearest the windows, it was impossible clearly to see the wound one had to dress. At dusk, when only a small oil lamp was lit, all were reduced to the same necessity of doing delicate work in semi-darkness. Opposite the windows a sentry held the door, at which a dense crowd of men hardly fit to stand waited for hours for their turn to enter.

As we finished one dressing after another, the man gave his name to a clerk and limped out. A fresh case was then admitted. Bent often with pain, each would begin trying to pull off the upper or nether garments, stiff with dried blood, which concealed the hole or gash to be dressed. Impeded by broken fingers or a broken limb, and with no one to help, the wretched creatures fumbled slowly. Succeeding at last, they would stand patiently, sometimes almost completely naked, among the crowd of busy men and women, perhaps for twenty minutes, till their turn came.

These conditions imply no deficiency on the part of the Bulgarians concerned. Every man and woman was busy. The whole nation was overtaxed. It was inevitable that work should be largely amateur and under-manned. In the main the situation was normal to all war.

On the part of the wounded I saw no sign of complaint, only once of pain wilfully exaggerated to attract sympathy. There was marvellous patience; no thought

of claiming the kindness due to sacrifice ; continual signs of gratitude, obviously sincere.

For us amateur dressers, the procedure was as follows : We put on one of the white overcoats, snatched one of the lumps of cotton-wool which lay in a dish of 'sublimate' (a transparent fluid of whose exact chemistry we were all ignorant), selected a wound, and began to wash it. At first, finding the men wince, I tried to spare them : however gentle an amateur may wish to be, his clumsiness must give extra pain. But the doctor hurried up, begged me not to waste time, seized the wool, and scrubbed the raw flesh as with a scrubbing-brush ; then showed me how to rub in iodine (almost as painfully caustic as the sublimate), digging it in with a small stick tipped with cotton-wool. Fatigue and monotony soon dispelled all sympathetic feeling in us, and I was able to work as brutally as the best. Following the sublimate and the iodine, one took gauze, cotton-wool, and bandage from the table ;

when a compress was needed, the woman who kept this table supplied cut oil-silk of the right size. Bandaging is a mystery that one acquires with gratifying speed. I had at least the satisfaction of observing that the bandages which I removed showed even less skill than those with which I replaced them.

The doctors at the front believed in plugging the deep holes in the flesh, and among the cruellest tortures was the pulling out of these plugs. A week's soaking and drying with blood had made them one solid mass with the bandage. There was no time to unfasten gently, nor any sterilised fluid for softening. No washing was done. Smashed hands were left with a mass of dirt all round the wound. When a finger-end was shot through, so that its shape was like a two-pronged fork, it was just brushed with iodine and bandaged over.

Often a bullet was embedded, generally in the back or leg. Then a medical student, a girl of about twenty years, had her reward for the long hours of toil. The

doctor was amused to let her enjoy herself. The man was brought near the light, and the knife probed for the ball. Cries and groans filled the air till it was gripped and extracted. Anæsthetics were scouted, but sometimes a glass of cognac checked the noise for a moment.

A case of deep-seated injury, for instance a ball embedded in the coccyx, and excruciatingly painful to the sciatic nerve, would be reserved for foreign Red Cross surgeons many days' journey further on. But problems more ghastly for the amateur were disposed of at once. There were lacerations by dum-dum bullets. It is said that a hard-nosed bullet sometimes expands on striking a bone, so that lacerations by expansion need not prove the Turks guilty of a breach of primary international honour. Foreign military attachés, however, picked up Turkish dum-dum ammunition, and nothing else could have expanded in soft flesh with the dreadful results that came in a few cases to our surgery. One, for instance, had, in traversing the upper

arm, spread so as to make the exit wound quite five inches long. Another, entering the inner side of the thigh, caused on the outer side a hole quite fourteen inches in length, the flesh protruding in separate oblong masses, mangled together, the skin apparently all carried away. In attempting to treat such a wound, what seemed to be required was an immense courage. I have never known any moral test so severe as the sense of shattering difficulty to be faced. A much slighter dum-dum wound was in the hand. In the palm was the tiny entrance hole ; at the back of the hand the core of the bullet had splintered the metacarpal bone which connects the first finger with the wrist ; but round the course taken by this core the soft lead seemed to have sprayed so quickly that in a flight of one inch it had spread to a circle more than an inch wide, carrying away all this extent of sinew and flesh, and leaving a cavernous hollow across which the jagged ends of bone met unevenly. The task was to cut off

these loose ends and clean the hole. The man, who fell to my lot, waited in extreme pain for fully ten minutes, with the wound open, till the doctor fetched his long forceps and gripped the end of the bone connecting with the finger. All his strength failed to cut it. The man half swooning, as the machinery of the knuckles was twisted to and fro, we gave him brandy. The tension grew intolerable as the minutes passed. At last, the instrument proving unequal to cutting through direct, the doctor was obliged to break the bone instead, finally bending it off as one breaks a stick, the flesh almost tearing as the knuckle and first finger were twisted from their alignment.

The more ruthlessly and quickly we toiled, the larger seemed the crowd still needing our services. The air grew fouler, the heat more intolerable, the crush more annoying, the smell of gangrenous and exposed flesh more disgusting. We worked with brutal haste, but never could we get through that endless queue at the door.

The pathos and cruelty of the situation seemed all the more evident to the mind, because it had ceased to touch the feelings.

Here were human beings of a fine type, peasants of pure blood, in the prime of life, remarkably free from immoral disease, of a courage and endurance that makes them renowned as fighters throughout Europe, with a quality of mind and body unique among the peasants of the world. As one worked on, the mind recollected, with impartial coldness, the immense value of each of these creatures, beings to whom the expression 'Made in the image of God' might quite philosophically be applied.

And here, at closest quarters, by the insistent impact of sight and smell and hearing and touch, we realised this image smashed; its capacity for work, thought, fatherhood, happiness, destroyed by resultant ill-health; not in one case alone, such as would in peace time in a case of misfortune move a whole nation to sympathy, but by scores and hundreds and tens of thousands.

CHAPTER IV

DEVASTATION

KIRKLISSE quickly settled down to its function as the main clearing-house for the transport of General Dimitrieff's army and for the wounded.

The mosque by the side of the steep main road had the appearance of a warehouse at the docks ; the sacks and ammunition boxes were piled in it almost as high as the tall stair which, for Moslem worship, culminates in the pulpit. The temptation to use the most solid and fireproof building in the town was too great. It overcame all considerations of respect for religious feeling and desire to avoid the charge of desecration. It is only fair to say that at Lule Burgas the magnificent mosque and the courtyard with its lovely stone colonnade

were well protected. I had been shocked by the failure to protect other mosques, and was somewhat relieved to find that at Lule Burgas, while the Christians were preventing desecration, it was the Turks themselves who before their flight had used their own church as a military store. Their gun-carriages stood round the court. It was Mahomedan indifference to Mahomedan sacred places against which the Christian was now paradoxically protesting by his refusal to turn the place to any further military account.

But at Chorlu the mosque was a melancholy sight: it was neither revered nor turned to use. Small boys were climbing the pulpit: the chandeliers lay smashed on the ground, and hooligans were hurling from the carved stone gallery the vast stores of printed paper which, judging from the litter of war, it is the peculiar fashion of both soldiers and ecclesiastics in Turkey to amass. I picked up among them an annotated copy of the Koran, elaborately written by hand. A member

of the general's staff was an expert in Turkish and Arabic, but so perfect was the caligraphy that he could not for the moment be certain that it was not the work of a printer.

The desecration of places of worship is a bigger feature of war than we generally imagine. In peace time the rudest feels some respect for his neighbour's feelings, if not for the unseen world. The very sight of death in any form is unfamiliar to us. A dead dog is an unpleasant event ; even the body of a mouse by the road commands our attention. Death and blood are put out of sight. These things are symptoms of the refinement which grows with ordered life and distinguishes man from beast. In war time we return to the outlook of the animal ; the desecrated church, the corpse in the mud, do not even constitute an object of interest ; veneration, refinement, and disgust have vanished from the mind.

On November 12 we left Kirklisse for

the front. To supply the troops hitherto had meant transport in ox-waggons, firstly from Yamboli to Kirklisse, which in good weather occupied six days, and then an immensely greater distance from Kirklisse to the front. The railway, which from here runs by a branch line to the main Turkish system, had just been brought into use by the invaders, the abandoned engines having been repaired sufficiently to satisfy the needs of the commissariat. We travelled in one of the first trains which took the place of ox-waggon transport, and covered the distance in eight hours, which had hitherto occupied as many days. Bread and ammunition filled most of the train. An ordinary covered waggon was added, which conveyed our six horses, two for ourselves, one for Lieutenant P—— of the First Cavalry Regiment, and three for the troopers, kindly placed at our disposal by the general Staff.

On such a daily train the life of the army at the front depended, and here in the vast province of Thrace, where

through fire and devastation the whole of the population seemed to have disappeared, the army constituted, as it were, the entire human society of the country. The supply of the army, day by day, was like a vast piece of collectivist government, in which the whole community had embarked upon a gigantic picnic. Seen from Kirklisse itself, there was nothing to introduce the idea of disorder, and in fine weather the impression of a great concerted open-air advance was exhilarating to a degree.

But within 300 yards of the station the mind was abruptly brought back to the real nature of this communistic organisation, when the train slowed down to pass the wreckage of a locomotive and several carriages lying below the railway bank. On the evening of Wednesday, October 23, the famous stampede had taken place; Mahmud Mukhtar had caught the infection and made for the railway station. According to the accounts of those who saw what passed, his determination to get away at all

costs was sufficient further to demoralise his men. It is said that he first demanded a train, but the station officials protested that the line was not clear; he then ordered the officer with him to threaten the engine-driver with death if he did not start at once. With a revolver at his head, the engine-driver started the train, which was filled to overflowing with panic-stricken troops. Within five minutes it ran into the train coming up from the south. Seven men were killed, including an officer, and large numbers were injured. The Pasha was unhurt, and, hurrying back to the station, he was able by renewed threats to obtain a horse-carriage, in which he made good his escape.

The first station south of Kirklisse is Kavakli. Here the walls are thickly dotted with bullet marks. An advance-guard action had taken place around the station; a small body of troops had, by means of the white flag, induced a Bulgarian officer to approach, and then shot him at close range. The troops made

short work of the offenders ; storming the station-house, they rushed upstairs, where the Turks had taken refuge in the telegraph operator's room. Not one was left alive.

At each station officers engaged on various departments of organising work got in or out of the train. I found myself greeted by a Bulgarian whom I had known in London. I quickly identified him as the former secretary of the Bulgarian Legation in Queen's Gate, now turned Red Cross officer, and going to the front with a field hospital. He was something of a politician, well known for his advanced views. It was interesting to hear his account of scenes on the battle-field, where he had been busy with the work of collecting the wounded and the dead. He had been struck by the pathos of a Turkish trench in which, so deadly had been the Bulgarian fire, the men lay dead close together, the whole length of the trench, all shot through the head.

We passed the smoke of villages still burning, and then, beyond Baba Eski,

we reached the junction with the main line at Mandra.

Here the train had been fired on by bashibazouks four days before. A band of these, numbering, it was said, over a thousand, was still operating from this large village. Shortly after the big battle, these men, mostly Mahomedan Bulgarians, had visited the detachment of the invading army at the station, talked in Bulgarian, said they were Christians, and professed themselves friendly. When the troops had been put thoroughly at their ease, and left aside their arms, the visitors suddenly seized their rifles and killed them all.

Another half-hour, and we reached Lule Burgas station, distant several miles, as Turkish stations commonly are, from the town. The commandant was kind, and found us good quarters with a Greek merchant. Neighbours dropped in who could talk French, and supper was beguiled with weird tales of the flight of Turkish peasants; the panic of troops; officers throwing off all but their shirts in order

to run quicker and further ; others begging a crust of bread from door to door ; droll Turkish ruses defeated by Bulgarians with the aid of Greek residents who welcomed the invaders; everything tinged with the brilliance of Greek imagination.

These were non-combatants whom the war had treated kindly ; but even from their reports it was easy to see that few had escaped so well. The price of war was heavy for the villages round, and one began to realise its true meaning. The main feature had been (as it was always evident that, in a Balkan war, it would be) the sacrifice of non-combatants. Greek ladies had touching stories of their village friends. A woman well known to our hostess was in tears. Her three daughters, unhappily born pretty, had been taken away by the Turkish troops.

We saw in various districts whole villages deserted, others destroyed. No sign of life remained. Outside the village, however, we would find lean dogs slinking

away with a guilty air. They had finished the best parts of the dead horses and were now living on the last food that remained. A swarm of grey crows, such as we know in England as 'hooded crows,' at one place betrayed what the dogs were living on. It was a heap of corpses collected in the open field.

In two hours we passed many villages wholly or partly burned. The officer with us rode steadily on, betraying no curiosity to examine what might be left in the ruined houses or what had been the course of events. They had no reference to future fighting. They could be ignored. I was anxious, however, to learn a little more, and stopped behind, on one occasion, to examine a large village which had been even more flourishing than the rest. The stacks of corn here were not only smouldering, but blazing as if lately fired, though they had been alight for more than a week. Others resembled nothing so much as slag-heaps, the grey ash appearing quite dead, till on approaching closer one found cracks through

which lurid red heat was visible, like cracks in fresh lava.

It is sometimes supposed that the villages in Turkey are collections of squalid huts, so that their destruction does not mean the same thing as destruction in Europe. Often, however, as in this case, the level of comfort is not lower, but much higher, than in our English villages of hired labourers, or among French and German peasants.

The houses here were, as everywhere, the dwellings of independent farmers, standing in ample space, with thorn hedges round the enclosure, with plenty of out-houses and small barns. It was a rich village, not only with well-tiled houses and verandahs, but even with ornamental gardens, and orchards formally planted. Here, among the surrounding ruins and expanse of ash, were frequently little flower-beds, in which marigolds and stocks were incongruously blooming.

Within the houses almost everything was destroyed through the collapse of the

roof, the fall of the walls, and the total incineration of all wood-work. Occasionally, however, some utensils had been outside the house, and so remained unburnt. An impression of the comfortable life which had disappeared was given by kitchen utensils, even by sewing machines, and by the baby's cradle.

We separated to look inside houses still standing, and I heard a call from the lieutenant that he had made an interesting find. In a comfortable spacious kitchen were remains of various European products, the tinned meats of Strasbourg, and the baking-powder of England; but what had attracted the lieutenant's attention was a profusion of cartridges on the floor, evidently fired from a small window overlooking the valley. It was quite a museum of the ammunition of the last forty years, going back to one of the earliest types of percussion-cap rifle cartridge. Treasured by some peasant family for generations past, they had now been used by bashi-bazouks against non-combatants. With

their help the Turk had performed his threat, that if driven from Europe he would shed innocent blood first.

Where were the villagers—Turk or Christian—who had so lately called these houses 'home'? No one could tell. A large number were dead; some lay unburied, others in large fresh-dug graves; but for the most part they had put together such belongings as would go into the family ox-waggon, placed the babies on the top, and trekked away.

As for the Christians, it was supposed that they had found shelter in neighbouring villages, unburnt or only partially destroyed. The inhabitants of these, at the best extremely poor, and with nothing to spare for others, in a normal winter might perhaps keep the strangers from starvation for a time. But all this was conjecture. Their whereabouts remained a mystery. For the whole machinery of society was broken down. All the features of a civilised country were gone. There were no posts, no

markets, no police, no law courts, none of the machinery of order. Even the features of a community of savage villages had disappeared, for human beings had no shelter and could not move with safety about the country. Therefore the dissemination of news did not even reach the level of rumour. Travelling of any kind was unsafe, and the whole of non-combatant society cowered out of sight in fear and hunger.

So much for the Christians.

But the larger number of sufferers were undoubtedly Turks. It was the universal belief that the troops of the allies would avenge their wrongs by slaughtering the Mahomedans. A universal exodus took place from Turkish villages. The dismal procession of family ox-waggons for the most part found its way to Constantinople and other ports on the Marmora or the Ægean. Some were shipped to Asia, some remained in hiding in the European towns, many died of cholera. It is hard to say which were the most unfortunate.

For the relief either of Turks or Christians

no means existed—for social and economic organisation had disappeared. The army alone represented the social organism. It is true that civil prefects arrived after long delay at the towns, but of necessity they could effect little, overshadowed by the military régime. When my brother and I, as agents of the Balkan War Relief Fund, discussed with them the question of dealing with hunger and cold in the villages, they confessed their total inability to make any suggestion whatever. Even the heads of the religious communities, which in Turkey form the most important framework of society, were without knowledge. Still less could a new set of administrators, themselves undermanned, survey their districts, or form even the roughest estimate of the numbers and needs of the population.

No one could travel except as part of the military machine. This machine, already overtaxed and strained to the utmost to conduct the war, had not a man to spare for escorting prefects or establishing administration ; and even considerable

towns, not to speak of the villages, remained for many weeks without any representative of law and order.

In such conditions every criminal is free to plunder his neighbours; this is the normal condition of an occupied country in time of war unless the conqueror has forces to spare for the rapid establishment of government. In the Franco-German war, which represented the highest standard yet attained in this respect, a long period elapsed before anarchy was overcome. In such circumstances it is not strange that ugly deeds were done by non-combatants. Whichever side had the upper hand took advantage of the opportunity of wiping off old scores. The Turks did their worst before retiring. The bands of local rebels, on the other hand, long ago organised to resist the Turk, took vengeance, it must be feared, in similar fashion, when their turn came. Such a welter of brutality and suffering had always been foreseen by those who

knew the country, if a way could not be found by the Great Powers to effect reform. They alone by *force majeure* could act as the world's police, and prevent the inferno.

If any political moral is to be drawn from outrage, the guiding factor must be sought in the conduct of the two races in their organised aspect ; that is to say, by the behaviour of their troops. It remains to be proved that regular troops of the allies, or even irregular bands, under the command of regular officers, have been guilty of atrocious acts.

I am able to state from personal knowledge that outrages charged against regular troops of the allies were the work of irregulars and did in fact cease when the troops arrived on the scene ; and that many of the perpetrators were punished.

As to the troops, however, on the Turkish side, though evidence is of necessity equally scarce, I found proof of the misconduct of regular troops which was convincing to my own mind. It would be

very unlike Turkish history in the past if humanity had suddenly been impressed upon the mentality of Turkish troops by their officers, or even on that of the officers themselves. It is on record by the European officers attached to the gendarmerie in Macedonia from 1905 to 1908, that they saw the most horrible outrages committed and women slaughtered by Turkish troops, that they themselves protested to the officers, and that the officers declined to interfere.

Outrages have been advertised *ad nauseam,* in order to manufacture political sympathies. The real deduction to be drawn from them was not that either government was to blame (for outrages are the incident of every war), but that an immense world of misery remained to be relieved. Great efforts to this end were made by the Balkan War Relief Fund in Eastern Macedonia and Thrace and the Macedonian Relief Fund further west. Those who concerned themselves with

Balkan atrocities could prove their sincerity, not by attacks on the allies, but by subscriptions to these Funds, for which appeals were issued, notably by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and by the Lord Mayor of London.

To illustrate the degree of misery to be dealt with I may quote Mr. Wilkie Young, British Vice-Consul at Philippopolis, who most kindly undertook to act as an agent of relief. He wrote 'In some villages only women and children are left; other villages have lost all their animals; and both these categories have consequently no means of sending down to the towns for supplies, even if money were placed in their hands. To these, therefore, help must be brought in kind. Other localities, within reach of supplies, can fend for themselves if given the wherewithal to buy. Approximately every pound sterling should suffice to keep one hundred adults for one day in this district.'

My brother, the Revd. Harold Buxton,

who established the organisation of relief in the Drama district, explained the situation as follows :

'We who have come straight from Macedonia must hasten to give you some picture of the appalling conditions which prevail in many districts there as a direct result of the war. Unless you have actually seen it, you can hardly realise what war means, inevitably, to the non-combatant population—the old men, the women, and the children. The men at least have the glory of fighting ; and, moreover, they have the first claim on the necessaries of life available. The sacrifices imposed on the non-combatants in many cases exceed those which are made by the soldiery. Suspense and constant dread ; the atmosphere of passion, strife and bloodshed ; nakedness, exhaustion and lack of food and shelter—these are their obvious and inevitable sufferings. These things must continue until peace is declared; some of them must continue during the winter

months, except so far as they are relieved by the help sent from England. It is for the needs of the non-combatants, the innocent victims of war, that our Fund has been raised and is now working.

'Captain Masterman, Mr. Orloff, and I reached Drama on December 13, after four days' journey through the mountains from Sofia. We found the large garrison of troops sufficiently supplied; but as for the mass of the civil population, famine stared them in the face. The marvel is that they live at all, in view of the fact that all food supplies are commandeered by the Government. But, no doubt, some houses had their secret stores hidden away until after the establishment of order, and those are now brought out and shared by the residents with their "refugee" visitors.

'The soldiers get one loaf a day. The first thing I noticed in Drama was a "Tommy" sharing his loaf with some hungry Turkish children—a generous impulse, to part with any of his precious

store! But a hungry child is not to be resisted. Those very children had come perhaps a journey of fifty to a hundred miles on foot, from Nevrokop or further north, flying before the advancing army. Here they were, after that desperate flight, with or without their parents, lodged in miserable tenements already overcrowded, treasuring the scanty garments that remained to them. This is the problem of fugitives, which, though present in every war, has been specially acute in the Balkans. Twenty-five thousand Turkish peasants poured into the town early in November, hoping to keep behind their own army. But when the town surrendered they could go no further, and were literally amazed to find that instead of being massacred they were guaranteed security and protection by the Bulgarian commandant. Most of these refugees have now gone back to their villages, but a large number from Nevrokop still remain. Our relief is being given to from four hundred to five hundred families

in Drama, very carefully selected as being the most desperate cases.

'With regard to the villages, a typical case is that of Plevna, about five miles from Drama. The peasants were Bulgarian and Greek, and lived mainly on tobacco cultivation in the surrounding fields. On the approach of the Bulgarian army the village was entirely destroyed by the order (it is said) of a Turkish bey from Drama. One hundred and seventy houses were burnt out; 210 stacks were also destroyed by fire, and 69 persons were killed. Nearly 160 families are left without shelter or change of clothing. Under the former régime the Turkish bey had the right to collect revenue in kind from the villagers, and a large deposit of grain was thus, fortunately, left in a store just outside the village. The Bulgarian army requisitioned a considerable portion of it, but 15,000 kilos were distributed—enough to supply the people for six weeks. When Mr. Orloff and I visited this place near the end of December, we found the store nearly run

out. However, with our limited funds we could only give them the alternative of clothing *or* flour ; we could not promise both. They decided for clothing, and this I sent out from Drama on December 27. The Prefect has promised to bring the most needy into the town later on, when the weather is more severe, and will find them shelter for two months.

'Destruction has been due partly to the Turkish army in retreat, in its desire to prevent stores falling into the hands of the Bulgarians, and partly to the uncontrolled "bands," who seem to have destroyed property without reason.

'In one house we found the inmates in a state of the greatest want and discomfort. Two families of refugees had demanded space and shelter ; the women were crying bitterly. No wonder ! Accustomed to the utmost seclusion, one can hardly imagine the horrors which this crowding and publicity must mean to them. Elsewhere we found two little boys who had been left as orphans or forgotten in the mad panic of

retreat, unclaimed, yet thrown back as if by chance from the sea of destruction which had almost swallowed them.'

We spent a day riding out of Lule Burgas, some four hours westward towards Baba Eski, and visiting the village of Alapli. Fine houses of prosperous peasants stood in ruins on every side. The church, as frequently in this part of Turkey, had been lately rebuilt in stone of rather massive workmanship. Here, it was said, the population had been induced to take refuge, and had then, as in the historical case of the Bulgarian atrocities of 1876, been deliberately burnt to death. Roof, pulpit, altar, screen, pictures, human bodies (if such had been there)—all were reduced to a dead level of grey ash, above which nothing remained except the twisted forms of the iron crosses and a pile of finely cut glass, where the chandeliers, so prominent in orthodox churches, had fallen from the roof.

Not all the houses in the village were burnt, though the sickening smell of

smouldering walls and furniture was universal. We ate some lunch in the verandah of a typical peasant's house, a pleasant place with tiled roof and outbuildings. An extremely pretty girl about three years old played beside us. It was hardly possible to realise that many such children, and some younger still, had here, on this very spot, a few days before, been butchered in cold blood. Turkish barbarities seldom follow any ordered plan, but here more thought than usual was displayed, in that the troops took pains to slaughter those symbols of Christian infidelity—the swine. The human bodies already lay buried in the cemetery overlooking the village, but the carcases of pigs still lay about the open spaces, and in the wicker enclosures which do duty for pigsties.

Nearer Lule Burgas lies the village of Aivali ; here the Turkish troops had withdrawn at the approach of a Bulgarian cavalry reconnaissance, and the villagers,

entirely Greek, expressed their feelings by ringing the church bells. The cavalry had occasion to leave the village, and the Turks returned. About November 3 the English papers published a hideous account of the massacres which followed. We had occasion to testify that unhappily these reports were only too correct. Not only had killing on a large scale taken place, but numbers of women and children were left wounded. Crouching by the fire in the first house that we entered were two women, apparently unable to move. They had terrible gashes in the throat, and could not lift their heads without torture. Another woman was wounded on the head. From the next house that we approached a figure stepped into the verandah, whose appearance seemed at a distance to indicate some dreadful disease. It was a girl of seventeen or eighteen, whose evident good looks had inspired the Asiatics with the idea of disfiguring without killing her. Dreadful cavities on each side of the nose made it evident that blank cartridge had been fired

with the muzzle close to the face. The wounds, then nearly a fortnight old, had never been dressed, and the flesh remained in irregular masses still black with the powder of the rifle charge. Other and more dreadful deeds had been done, which I cannot bring myself to record. One, however, I felt bound to telegraph to the London press, because the perpetration of atrocities is the fundamental argument for reform in Turkey and must not be ignored or forgotten till the frontiers of Turkish rule are finally settled. Let me minimise description by quoting from my telegram: 'Saw husband of woman whose unborn child was dismembered.' We were reluctantly driven to accept the evidence for the occurrence of this tragedy as stated. But words are not needed. It is our duty to think.

These atrocities were not the work of irregulars alone. A melancholy proof of this appeared, for instance, in two bullet wounds through the leg of a small

GREEK PEASANT WOMEN WOUNDED BY TURKISH TROOPS.

THE BURNT CHURCH AT ALAPLI.

child, certainly made, as I saw myself, by the small-bore rifle of the Turkish regular.

For the most part the wounds remained undressed, though at the very moment of our visit a field hospital contingent was passing through the village in ox-waggons, on its way to the front.

War adds a hundredfold to the sufferings of non-combatants, for whose needs, even in normal times, the supply of doctors is not excessive; it demands the devotion of the entire medical service to the combatants alone. It seemed to us monstrous that though the plight of these wounded women was known in the town of Lule Burgas, not five miles off, nothing had been done for them by the commandant. The very doctors who saw them and described them to us had neglected them, as one neglects a moth in the candle. We could do no more than leave some money with the priest and the relatives in charge, and express our feelings freely to the commandant; but no doubt in

vain; for such is war. It breeds indifference. To the men employed in it, callousness is not only natural, it is their duty. Not a moment's energy or thought must be spared from the supreme need of winning the war. Here was a country torn throughout its length with misery in quality and quantity unparalleled; yet even for us, concerned with relief funds, the agony of these people was like a tiresome intrusion, a nuisance which distracted us from the point of view of our soldier companions. Such is the mental distortion of war.

CHAPTER V

THE HOME COUNTRY

THE soldiers at the front entered upon the war with dogged determination. They were in an ideal state of mind for a national combat. They were full of dash, yet cool-headed; determined to avenge their nation's wrongs, yet not bitter with hatred. Bulgarian reserve, both in men and women, stood the supreme strain. It was a point of honour as the regiments marched from the capital that no tears should be shed. Nothing could have been more different to the tearful demonstrations or the forced, and sometimes alcoholic, hilarity which marked the departure of some contingents from London or Paris in recent wars. It was enough that flowers should be carried in the muzzles

of the rifles; there was nothing else to mark the difference between starting for manœuvres and starting for the great national sacrifice.

When I arrived at the scene of war, I found even the wounded men in hospital still full of fighting spirit. Their thoughts were with the army at the front; they were longing to return. It was evident that family and home occupied only a moderate share of their attention.

But three weeks later, fatigue had told on them. They had performed unparalleled feats of endurance. Some had fought continuously for the first eight days of the war; some had then marched sixty miles in two days and at once joined the fight on the morrow. Most of them had, with inadequate food, fought the great battle at Lule Burgas, lasting five days, immediately after a period when they had been without supplies. They had then pressed on through the rain and the heavy mud into the Constantinople peninsula, dragging artillery through

quagmires, sticking fast and sometimes carrying the guns by hand. It was no wonder that at the end they succumbed to dysentery and something very like cholera. Enthusiasm could not last longer, and after the fight at Chatalja, a different spirit prevailed. Men who returned wounded from that struggle could hardly be recognised as of the same material as those whom I had seen similarly wounded from the early battles. Their talk was of getting home, the excitement of war had spent itself and left the mind free to dwell on their normal interests—their farms and their families.

And indeed the home country needed thinking about. The strain imposed by the war on every family in the land was evident even to the traveller on the railway, or to the merest visitor to Belgrade, Athens, or Sofia. In the supreme crisis of their history the Balkan nations displayed a spirit which would have done credit to the oldest and most educated state.

Their capitals have at all times an aspect of reality, industry, and simplicity. There is little needless wealth to show, and nothing which, in the West, would be called luxury. Everyone is a worker, and everyone a serious politician. There are no drones, and none who spend their lives in the pleasures, refinements, luxuries, vices, the idle amusements of the great cities of Europe. The buildings represent utility, means fairly adapted to ends, but with no cumbrous decoration or ponderous display. These capitals are bureaucratic settlements, devoted to the deliberate ends of national government with a minimum of waste, strictly appropriated to use alone, rendering their service to the nation as a counting-house renders its service to a great factory. Peasants walk their streets in brilliant village dresses. No one thinks a rational country costume inappropriate to the pavement of the capital. This is an index to the idea of purpose which pervades the town ; there is none of the sense that a different costume is needed

for urban life, an idea which arises from the association of towns with pleasure and display.

The spirit of Sofia, always serious, appeared even more so in time of war. One noticed at once an abnormal condition in that the streets were swept by women, that the public offices had boys for door-keepers, and that the museum was guarded by a peasant with an ancient rifle, a lamb-skin cap and raw leather sandals.

Sofia lies between the Balkan and the Vitosch mountains in a small plain, so elevated that it forms almost a summit, as it were, to the habitable Balkan lands, and so central that from here rivers drain in many directions: on the south to the Ægean; on the east to the great valley of the Maritza; on the north, by a strange chasm through the 'Old Balkan' range, to the Danube. There is something bracing, even in the hottest summer, in the atmosphere of Sofia. Southwards down the length of any of its strangely modern stucco streets you see the blue haze of Vitosch hanging over the

town. Turn the other way, and from the low ridge where stands the cathedral and the Russian Legation, you see the high wall of the Balkan, carrying the mind on the one side to its eastern end on the Black Sea, on the other to its curving extension between Hungary and Rumania and on to Galicia, Poland, and Bohemia. In winter the sensation is even more inspiriting ; the heights round are a dazzling white, and the brain workers of the town, both native and diplomatic, snatch an hour's daily recreation in skating on perfect ice in the park beyond the Parliament House.

Few sights can be more inspiring to the lover of liberty and national progress than a view of Sofia from the hill where the great seminary of the national church overlooks the plain. There at your feet is spread out the unpretentious seat of a government which stands for the advance of European order in lands long blighted with barbarism. Here resides, and is centred, the virile force of a people

BULGARIAN AMATEUR NURSES.

which has advanced the bounds of liberty. From here, symbolised by the rivers and roads running down on each side, has extended, and will further extend, the power of modern education, of unhampered ideas, of science and of humanity. From this magnificent viewpoint Sofia stretches along the low hill with the dark background of the Balkan beyond. Against that background now stands out the new embodiment of Bulgarian and Slavonic energy, genius, and freedom of mind, the great cathedral, with its vast golden domes brilliantly standing out from the shade behind them. In no other capital is a great church shown to such effect, viewed from one range of hills against the mountainous slopes of another. It is a building which, with its marvellous mural paintings, would in any capital form an object of world interest, but which, in the capital of a tiny peasant State, supremely embodies that breadth of mind which

'. . . rejects the lore
Of nicely calculated less or more.'

Away to the right is the great military college, surmounting another hill. Here in normal times presides Colonel Jostoff, now chief of the staff of General Dimitrieff's army and of the combined armies at Lule Burgas and Chatalja, and also military member of the peace delegation in London. To-day, instead of military students, the building was filled with wounded. No fewer than 1200 lay there. The entire nursing staff was of lady volunteers; at their head a prime minister's widow; almost all of them untrained; many of high position; women of all grades working together without attention to social distinction. The doctoring was undertaken by foreign Red Cross contingents, all Bulgarian doctors being at the front. The vast building was divided, not in blocks, but horizontally, between several of these. The various floors allotted to the respective contingents formed worlds of different nationality, among whom Hungarian, German and Austrian occupied a prominent place.

There was one spot where, unlike any other, the number of men was undiminished. It was the choir gallery of the old Cathedral, still used for the central service of Sofia, until the new building is consecrated. That service is one which I never miss, and which anyone who can be at Sofia at 9.30 on Sunday morning should make a point of attending. The choir, originally trained by Russians, is of extraordinary excellence. There is, as elsewhere in the Eastern Church, no instrument to mar the exquisite beauty of its part-singing. Its members had, to my great satisfaction, not been called to the war. The service was rendered with more than usual impressiveness. The crowd of women and children was normal, and did not even display much mourning in its dress, for all news of casualties from the front was sternly suppressed by government; but not many officers were to be seen, and common soldiers, usually so numerous at the cathedral, were also absent, for few wounded men had yet been discharged

from the hospitals. Nearer the front, where troops were quartered, the war seemed rather to increase the number of soldiers attending mass. Even at Kirklisse, where the work of war was arduous, and at the advanced posts such as Lule Burgas, I saw large numbers of men from the regiments quartered there attending the Sunday celebration, although the Church was not Bulgarian, but orthodox Greek, by whom the Bulgarian has hitherto been regarded as schismatic. The new and friendly spirit born of the alliance was symbolised at Kirklisse, where King Ferdinand paid conspicuous attention to the Greek Church.

Bulgarians are distinguished for an extraordinary love of reality and a total freedom from desire for show. They might have been excused if, in the crisis of war, they displayed a nervous anxiety (for the national existence was at stake) or a sense of pride in their marvellous victories. The national characteristics of reserve and simplicity were put to a

supreme test, and in no way could the test have been more perfectly met. Coolness was, above all, conspicuous in ministers themselves. At a moment when the national existence was at stake ; when world-famous victories had been won ; and when the Great Powers might combine to deprive the nation of the fruits of those victories, ministers were displaying perfect sangfroid, seeking interviews with non-political friends, dispensing with motor-cars and walking to their appointments, while the Prime Minister, with utter freedom from self-importance or hurry, was calling on English acquaintances at the Bulgaria Hotel. Yet everyone had relations at the front, and knew the meaning of deep anxiety, both private and public.

The peasant soldier, when tired of war, could realise only too clearly the destitution of his home. From every farm the active man had gone ; the best of the waggons and the oxen had gone too. The Bulgar

is famous for work on the land; there is never, on his farm, a spare margin of labour to fall back on. The women have always more toil than their share, but now they were compelled to do the men's task as well—to guide the plough through the heavy clay, and in the absence of the ox-waggon even to act as beasts of transport. Along every road and from the windows of the train one could see women, girls and small boys toiling at men's work in the fields. It may well be that the extra strain will have injured many of the already hard-worked children.

But on the farms there was, at least in most cases, a store of food for the winter, and though the waggons were requisitioned, the corn, if taken, was paid for. In the towns, however, distress was terrible. All factories were closed, for nowhere did sufficient hands remain to work them. The unhappy families of the men who stayed, as well as those who had gone, were even more helpless than

if a general strike had been declared, because no organisation existed for mutual help. At the same time prices rose, and that stratum of the population which in every country lives on the margin of decent sustenance was brought to the level of starvation. It was as if every family was orphaned and every soldier's wife widowed, for no communications for a long period of the war were allowed from the front, and while the maintenance of the soldier's family was not provided for, the uncertainty of his fate created an anxiety even greater than the pain of ascertained loss.

The ordinary conditions of life became almost as severe as those at the seat of war, so that the sections of the nation which remained at home, equally with those at the front, formed, as it were, a gigantic camp—a vast factory, not of goods, but of efforts directed to one supreme end.

In the chief towns, after a month of war, destitution became acute, but little could

be done to relieve it. Such generosity as was available among those who had anything to spare was devoted to the war itself, or to the Red Cross Society, which had the whole burden of the wounded on its hands. In towns, therefore, like Sofia and Philippopolis, subscriptions were attempted, and the municipalities set aside funds, all too inadequate, for the families of soldiers and out-of-works. But the relief of distress is a matter requiring long practice, and remains an inexact makeshift, even in the wealthy and trained communities of England and Germany. In a new and poor country it cannot possibly cover the ground. Mothers of hungry children applied to the relief office, often in vain. Inquiry was necessary, to prevent the waste of funds, yet for inquiry there was no machinery at hand. At Philippopolis, when I returned from the war, a woman who had been refused help for her children cast about for some expedient to obtain attention for them. She could find

none, until it struck her at last that if she herself were dead, then surely the children would be cared for. She found no other way to save them, and with great deliberation she hanged herself.

III.—EPILOGUE

CHAPTER VI

THE WAR AND THE POWERS

At the headquarters of the army political news was scarce. Newspapers arrived from the capital sometimes in ten days, frequently not at all. But communications improved with the arrival of King Ferdinand. His journey itself represented a record in speed. The distance covered by us in two days' riding, and for which the ox-waggons occupied a week, was accomplished by him in a day. A large number of motors started simultaneously with the King from Yamboli, so as to provide for breakdowns. A considerable margin was expected to stick fast in the mud. A small proportion of the

total succeeded in getting through, and the triumphant entry took place, to everyone's astonishment, on the same day as the departure from Yamboli. A horse post was afterwards arranged for his Majesty's convenience, and we began to get letters and newspapers more quickly; at first by the same route, through the mountains, afterwards round the south and west sides of Adrianople, when railway communications improved.

The Bulgarian Foreign Office publishes a convenient daily sheet of condensed items of European news affecting Bulgaria —an ideally potted form of intelligence, reduced to a minimum. But I found to my surprise that even the generals did not make time to read it. The announcements of Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith that the allies should not be deprived of the fruits of their victories were still ignored by them a fortnight later, though at Sofia these were recognised as the most momentous of all events for Bulgaria, showing that the Powers had

accepted the new situation made by successful war, and would not any longer impose an artificial tyranny on the Balkan States.

Yet all the time the generals had their eye and their thoughts on politics of a real kind. With Bulgarian philosophy they relied upon the effect of realities like victory rather than the superficial tactics of journalistic diplomacy. Their attention could not be drawn beyond politics and war. The Balkan States are nations in arms, and as these nations have been necessarily absorbed in their political situation, every man is a thinker on international politics to a degree probably unparalleled in the world. There is hardly a peasant in Bulgaria who is not familiar through his friends and the newspaper with movements in England affecting his national cause; much more then, at the supper table of the generals, did politics share the conversation with war.

It was very instructive to realise from

their talk the light in which the action of the Great Powers must appear to these nations, for whom high diplomacy means not the safety of a government or the triumph of a Foreign Minister, but the making or marring of daily life.

For an Englishman, the difference between the aspects of things as seen in England and in Thrace was only too clear. One could not view the misery that prevailed on every hand without an uncomfortable recollection that if England had chanced to take a different line in the great days of the Russo-Turkish war, this unhappy country would have been freed for more than a generation. To-day there would be neither devastation, death, disablement, destitution, nor demoralisation, but a settled and prosperous community, and a land developing, as one has seen the land develop year by year in Bulgaria.

In recent years it has been the Powers collectively who, as seen from the Balkans, have cut such a poor figure. Trembling before their own divisions and the risks which

might arise from any positive action, they have been paralysed. Their measures have been purely negative. While admitting that the Macedonian grievance was intolerable, and that it menaced European peace, they brought forth before the Turkish Revolution of 1908 a scheme of inspection alone, which added to the chaos. They established officers to supervise, but not control, finance and gendarmerie. These served only to increase friction, to redouble political crime, and to aid the compilation of statistics of murder.

From the point of view of Foreign Offices and chancelleries the fault of Europe seemed slight. The blame seemed rather to attach to disturbers of the peace—to the rebels with insufficient common sense to overlook the destruction of their homes, to government with inadequate regard for the comfort of European diplomats. The efforts of Lord Lansdowne and Sir Edward Grey towards reform by the Concert did indeed represent a spirit which deserved the highest praise; but let anyone imagine himself a native of

Macedonia or Thrace, and glance at Europe from the bosom of a Balkan family; he will realise the incompetence, callousness and fatuity which, to one who lived in the hard realities that hitherto blasted the Balkan peasant's existence, attached to the Great Powers as a whole. To the peasant it is clear to him that if the populations of the great States understood life as he understands it, they would impose on their rulers a harmony which would remove the dangers of action by the Concert, and would demand of them a reforming policy. They would not tolerate the continuance of grievances whose removal was only prevented by the rift in the Concert and the sluggishness of the diplomatic machine, and which were easily amenable to the overwhelming physical force of the Great Powers. To the generals at headquarters in Kirklisse, chatting in French, the Powers were not *puissances* but *impuissances*.

The culminating phase of the drama has been the most discreditable of all. The Powers for many years had done nothing

except to forbid the Balkan peoples to liberate themselves. Now, on the very eve of war, while wholly sanctioning the demand for reform, they ponderously threatened the small States with deprivation and punishment if they should fight. The promises of the Concert, which in 1878 had at Berlin restored Macedonia to Turkey, on the ground that reform would be better effected by the Great Powers than by the local populations, had proved false. The small States had long been ready to effect what the Powers would not. Yet still the Concert repeated its parrot cry, 'You shall reap no reward if you fight; we will not guarantee reform, but neither shall you.'

The Bulgarians, whose Government in 1903, and again in 1908, had with such difficulty refused the popular demand for war, saw now, as we sat at supper in the Turkish Club at Kirklisse, that their own view had been right. They had taken the Powers too seriously. The Powers had been 'bluffing' for their own advantage—and not even for their real advantage, but to avoid immediate trouble. The bubble was

now pricked. The death roll of 2000 murders a year between 1903 and 1908 might have been saved. The ponderous protests of the Collective Note of September, 1912, were not even serious. At the first great victory of the allies the Concert had, without a blush, swallowed its words of a month before. The moral force of civilisation had lost its weight. These prosperous, over-fed classes, who controlled the Governments of Europe, how could they be worthy of anything but cynical disgust? Viewed from the seat of war (and not from the Christian side only, but the Turkish also) the governmental morals of Europe were clearly contemptible.

This is not to say that the sacrifices imposed by the Powers' neglect were resented. The admiration of Europe for military success gave great delight. But the sacrifice involved suggests the question whether mere admiration is the attitude that becomes us best.

In England the war is welcomed. It is urged that it has brought to light a great

people; that 'the ventral dream of peace' is faded; that 'the great illusion' was not the value of war but the good of tranquillity; the Balkan nations have found their feet; there are new fighting races to be admired.

But the price of all this is ignored; we forget that the sacrifices involved could have been avoided. If Sir Edward Grey's effort of 1908 had not been interrupted by the Turkish Revolution, if by ever so little the forces in Europe urging the settlement of just claims by the Concert acting as a European police had been greater, a European governor would have been installed at Salonica. Bloodshed would have ceased, and in time an autonomous State would have been evolved.

There are those who argue that in any case Bulgaria would have made an excuse for war. Such a view proves an extraordinary ignorance of the nature of Bulgarian feeling. The extreme difficulty of arousing a State whose liberty has been secured, and whose temper is cool, to the risks of a war mainly designed to liberate others, has always been evident to those

who followed the attempt of the Macedonian refugees in Sofia to bring about Bulgarian intervention. To the Bulgar temperament a bird in the hand is worth many in the bush.

Unquestionably, at all events, the overwhelming force of the Powers, or even a section of them, acting as England, France and Russia acted at Dulcigno after the Berlin Treaty, could have solved the Balkan dilemma without firing a shot. It required only a somewhat more active belief in justice and self-government than has at present been evolved, to produce action by the Concert.

The question whether the Balkan problem could have been solved without war is of interest not alone to the Balkan and Ottoman people, but to the world at large. It calls our attention to the general problem of international harmony.

The Balkan imbroglio is a crucial illustration of the difficulties which confront those who desire to see wars avoided. It was, of all the world's problems, the

most likely cause of war and the most difficult to solve by peaceful means. If the pacificist can maintain his theory in spite of it, there is no difficulty which he cannot face, for the danger of war arises mainly from the unsettled portions of the world, and of these Turkey is the chief instance. They constitute bones of contention which, so long as they are unappropriated and without ordered administration, give rise to rival ambitions. The possible sources of friction of this kind have vastly diminished in our time alone, and decrease in number year by year. We have seen disappear from the list the Spanish colonies, Korea, Morocco, and now Macedonia. If those that remain can be removed without war, the prospects of peace are good.

Why, then, was not the problem of Macedonia solved without war? It is because, quite apart from the self-interested factors which in every country will always make for war, the disinterested feeling of Europe is itself doubtful on the

question of the benefits of permanent peace. This sense of doubt stifles the inclination of the mass of moderate men towards active support of pacifism. In regard to the Balkans the argument was constantly used that the Balkan nations could only gain by their own warlike efforts. The late Lord Percy was a distinguished exponent of this view. He held that without those efforts liberation would be useless. Consequently, when liberative action by the Concert was in question, the general desire for reform, which would have reinforced, for instance, Lord Lansdowne's proposal to the Powers in 1904, was paralysed at the start. Diplomacy, in short, failed to prevent war, not because a peaceful solution was not feasible, but because it was not thought desirable.

The question of the value of war is worth discussing because it is now for the first time taken seriously by the mass of men. The men of business, especially since the commercial failures resulting from

recent wars, and even from rumours of wars, such as caused the financial panics in September 1911, are beginning to wonder whether the whole of modern business life is not built upon a structure of peace and would not without it fall with a ruinous crash.

Arguments for war are losing their influence. The crude 'scientific' inference from the survival of the fittest has been adequately answered by the evident practical injury sustained to national physique by the French in the Franco-German war, and by such a people as the Bulgarians, who will perhaps have lost one in ten of their most vigorous men, incapacitated in the prime of life. Here the pacificist finds an ally in science itself—that of eugenics. The eugenist justly points to the physical advantage which the English race has gained through the non-participation of the healthiest working-classes as a whole in any great war.

Few wars are now called inevitable. It is admitted in England that our influence

GENERAL SAVOFF AND NAZIM PASHA AT THE CHATALJA CONFERENCE.

(One of the last photographs of Nazim Pasha before his assassination.)

has at times prevented war, and may often do so in the future. If our lead in the Balkan question had been but a little more forcible than it was, it might have prevented even that most unavoidable of wars. And few wars are thought now to 'pay.' It is not on the whole the financial or animal instincts of man which are responsible for the non-cessation of war. It is rather a general doubt whether, if war were to cease, there would not result some loss of national character. The opinion that a nation gains in character from the supreme effort of a national physical struggle is a matter of instinctive feeling, and dies slowly. If anywhere in the world it is likely to be proved, it would be by the Bulgarians, who through war have become known. It is vital to learn what light is to be gained at this point from the recent war. If Bulgarian character had without war developed the qualities usually ascribed to warlike races, the fact is of great importance. This question deserves a separate chapter.

CHAPTER VII

WHY THE BULGARIANS WON

A HIGH officer of the general Staff said to me that he had always relied on the Bulgarian troops, but he was surprised by their extraordinary excellence. He concluded a long eulogy with the remark that the great quality for war is 'good blood.' The expression, uttered in French, has a shade of meaning difficult to render; it is worth while to consider some of the qualities which justified it.

The feature of the fighting which has attracted most attention in Europe has been the *élan* shown at Kirklisse and Lule Burgas. This was the quality which surprised the Bulgarians themselves. It was, indeed, on the whole, the factor which won the war. At particular

moments it proved almost excessive. The troops out-marched their supplies, and consequently, through injury by hunger, fell sick at Chatalja. It also produced the Turkish panic at Kirklisse too soon, so that the majority of the garrison had escaped before the Bulgarian cavalry could cut them off.

But to anyone ignorant of Bulgarians the mention of *élan* alone would be misleading. It would give an impression of dashing style and quality like that of the Montenegrin, whereas its peculiarity lay in its combination with opposite qualities rarely found with that of dash. Its moral effect arose from the strength imparted to it by men habitually cool, practical and purposeful.

Illustrations of these qualities could be drawn by any traveller from ordinary Balkan life. Some were visible in time of war which acquire a peculiar interest now.

Take purpose first. There is something in the Bulgarian character, not exactly corresponding to tenacity or to

courage, which is I think best depicted in the conduct of the Bulgarian revolutionaries. These men, who have for twenty-five years worked against the Turkish government in Macedonia, habitually took their life in their hands, and frequently sacrificed it. They were always provided with bombs and with poison, to take their own lives in the event of being captured. There was no question but that capture would mean torture, and every man ran such obvious risks that sacrifice of life was deliberately undertaken. Bands were sometimes surrounded, and it was never known that a man gave himself up alive. On one occasion no fewer than thirteen men, finding themselves surrounded, and their ammunition running out, decided to die in orderly fashion. They hastily consulted together, and agreed to use their last cartridges on themselves. A note was then written which, in case it was ever found and taken home, would tell their parents and friends of their distress in causing them trouble. The

leader then shot each one in turn and finally himself.

When the war began, an incident occurred which picturesquely illustrates this dogged determination and indifference to life. The leader of the rebel organisation in Sofia was a man named Lazaroff. He had years ago been imprisoned, when a Turkish subject, and sent to an unwholesome fortress in Asia Minor. When released he had contracted consumption, and henceforward was obliged to keep his bed. From there, in a small hotel at Sofia, he directed the operations of the revolution in Macedonia, keeping up correspondence with the militant chief, by name Alexandroff. When war was declared he summoned to his bedside a leading professor of the University, himself a Macedonian, and handed over to him the funds of the organisation. He then wrote to Alexandroff praising his revolutionary genius, and saying that, as their great aim had now been realised by the war, he had reluctantly concluded

that his health was unequal to undertaking the new tasks of the future. It was not fitting, he said, that a revolutionary should eke out a useless life or die in peace. He then took a revolver and terminated his life.

Indifferent in some such fashion to death, the army went to the front with great though restrained cheerfulness. When visiting the wounded in the hospital I frequently induced them to speak of their ideas with regard to the war. 'We sang all the time,' they often said. 'We were fighting for our brothers, to release them from oppression. It is right that we should suffer for them. The Russians suffered to liberate us.' Outside Philippopolis, as we passed in the train, the youngest grade of recruits were being hurriedly taught the elements of drill. They were in the highest spirits, and cheered every train as it passed. I found, even among the wounded, no bitter feeling towards the Turks. They often described

the barbarities their comrades had suffered, and the news of these was suppressed by the Government lest it should arouse animosity among the people; but there was no trace of this among the soldiers.

Intelligent enthusiasm was so widespread that the war could be called popular in more than the ordinary sense. Its popularity was greater than could be imagined in England because the spirit of the country is really democratic. The officers feel no obligation to keep up a feeling of distance. The men have no sense of abasing themselves before a superior class. In both cases things are judged by the standard of utility. The object in view is one which appeals to all. Social distinction is forgotten in the urgent necessities of national life. As we rode with the commander-in-chief, peasants by the road would call to each other 'Savoff,' without the slightest note of awe. I frequently saw officers greeting with effusion private soldiers from other regiments, whom they hailed as old friends,

interested to find each other in unwonted scenes. This is largely due to the fact that the officers are sometimes drawn from peasant families. I remember once staying in a small farmer's house on the north side of the Rodope range, where everything was of the simplest. A few days later at Tchepine we were invited to dine with the mess of the detachment quartered there, and I noticed a particularly dapper and aristocratic-looking lieutenant. On inquiring who he was, I found him to be the son of the farmer with whom I had been staying. On the other hand, among the ranks at the war were sometimes to be found men of business, lawyers and government officials, often of better social position than some of the officers. I came across at different times journalists also, and diplomatists, serving as reservists.

The consciousness of an immense national effort helped to bring all sorts and conditions into line. The strain on the supply of men gave everyone the sense of national emergency. It was so great that

in the capital many unwonted functions were discharged by women. Every leisured woman in the country was occupied with the wounded, and on the farms there was not a woman or child whose work did not become tenfold more arduous because of the war. Factories were all closed; banks were short-handed; even Parliaments, if there had been work to perform, could with difficulty have done business, either in Belgrade or Sofia, because so many members of Parliament were fighting at the front. In the trenches at Chatalja one of the vice-presidents of the Bulgarian Parliament was seen by a friend of mine standing, after a rainy day, up to his waist in water.

Coolness is another quality which makes that of dash more remarkable. It was just like the cold-blooded patriotism of the Bulgarian to conceal all news of the dead and wounded from their friends at home. No lists were published except those at the gates of the hospitals showing the names of the patients within, from

whom alone, in exceptional cases, one might learn of a friend who was dead. This policy of secrecy may be brutal, but it was admitted to be useful. The idea of concentrating all attention upon national, and not personal, ends commended itself to the high patriotism which prevailed. It was agreed that if, for instance, the news of losses had reached the ladies working in the hospitals, work would have suffered, and possibly the great organisation of relief for the wounded, depending as it did on the efforts of the entire leisured class, might have broken down.

The quality of coolness, among the races of south-eastern Europe, is quite peculiar to the Bulgarian. The outward aspect of the capital was as frigidly calm as usual. When, after many weeks of war, contingents of volunteers were marching to the station, there was no sign of excitement or desire to stimulate their spirits. I saw no demonstration in the streets except at the office where volunteers were chosen by lot. There were large numbers disappointed,

and here alone I heard loud voices raised.

It is enough for a Bulgarian that he knows what he has to do and is carrying it out. He has no mannerism ; deep feeling would not be expressed by noise ; the whole instinct is towards reality. If a Bulgarian utters an emotional aphorism he does it with studied calm. If any sound were appropriate to the spirit of the nation, it is the deliberate growl of distant cannon. There is a Bulgarian maxim which runs—'Do not blow your own trumpet ; if you want to be praised it is better to let the other man do the praising.'

The Bulgarian mind, again, is practical. It is no doubt still debated, among European military experts, whether the army succeeded through a well-organised transport or in spite of the want of it. The foreign Red Cross contingents at the front were inclined to the latter view. Judged by English or by German standards, the system, or want of system, employed

led them to suppose that success came from 'muddling through.' They found that nothing was prepared for their arrival, and no classification of the wounded carried out. But it may be doubted whether the Bulgarian mind does not include some elements of a quality which is really higher than statistical efficiency. An English officer once discussed the problem of transport with General Savoff: the conversation went into detail, and finally reached the question of providing forage for transport oxen. Savoff said, 'We leave that to settle itself; you can organise too much.' Here you have the mind which not only foresees the difficulties and provides a way of meeting them, but also foresees the danger of relying upon schemes which may fail.

An incident occurred in the surgery at Kirklisse which may perhaps illustrate the same cast of mind. There was a great crowd of wounded men endeavouring to find entrance at the door, impatient for the treatment of their wounds. At one

moment the crowd burst in, and something approaching a little riot animated the unfortunate men, whose wounds had smarted uncleaned for a week past. The dressers, with their dishes of antiseptic and piles of bandages, seemed in danger of violence, when a revolver suddenly flashed; a bullet lodged itself in the wall; in a moment the Bulgarian doctor had effectively brought the little rabble to its senses and restored order. It was a sign either of barbarism or of genius for management. The end was attained by a disregard of rules and by a gift of adaptation, which may excusably be regarded as indicating the managing genius which distinguishes Europe from Asia. At all events there were no such disastrous errors in the commissariat of the Bulgarian army as disgraced the Crimean war.

The Balkan successes are being quoted in support of high military training on German lines for the rank and file. This is not the conclusion of Bulgarian experts or those who know their troops best. It

might equally be argued that the Turks failed because of German training; but no conclusions can be drawn from the Turk, whose mental composition is unique. It is indeed a fact that the Bulgarian troops were trained for active service by hard work, rough life, and by winter manœuvres; but the importance of training is not to be deduced from the Bulgarian ranks, whose time of service is less than that of many armies. It affects rather the quality of the officers. What struck an observer was their combined efficiency as professional men and as civilians. By far the greater proportion of them had been for many years without army training, but were employed in civil life as professional men or farmers, and had the qualities of the business mind, added to a background of professional military knowledge without the stiffness of professionalism.

As to the men, the chief factor in their efficiency is education. Whereas the Turkish soldiers, and even officers, were sometimes without any education, the Bulgarian

troops could read and write. The Bulgarian peasant reads political news, and few can be found who are not, through the press, familiar with the attitude of the Great Powers towards Bulgaria, and of bodies like the Balkan Committee, which concern themselves with Balkan affairs.

Intelligence is one of the qualities which produced the Balkan victory. Its conspicuous illustration is in the policy of the army leaders in concealing their plans for so many years.

Notable among these feats was the successful attempt to make Turkey believe that only two considerable armies could be brought against her on the Thracian side. It was consistently announced that the Bulgarian army, which, on a peace footing, numbered some 60,000, could be increased in war to 300,000. The actual number finally mobilised reached 430,000. A third army was thus sprung upon the enemy. It was collected at a base whose locality was carefully concealed, no outposts being

brought forward to cover it. The frontier north of Kirklisse was guarded only by a line of cavalry scouts.

The second trick played upon the Turks was the entire neglect to make a road towards Kirklisse itself. It was supposed, by the Turkish staff, that no large body of troops could move and take its transport through rough hills and bogs without the vestige of a made track. All the time the scheme was not only to move an army through a six days' march without a road, but when the only flat route through the hills, namely the road to Adrianople, was blocked, to carry the entire transport, outgoing and returning, of 300,000 men by a route hitherto held to be impossible.

In the result, the garrison of Kirklisse, not only inadequate, but taken by surprise, was naturally unable to keep its nerve.

We may perhaps count also as a blind the yearly announcement circulated through the European press that war was likely

GENERALS SAVOFF AND FICHEFF AND NAZIM PASHA AT THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN ARMISTICE.

in the spring. It became a legend that there would only be fighting when the snows melt, and year by year when summer came the world breathed more freely. Now, when the war has been successfully fought in autumn, it has been pointed out as obvious that the Balkan native can stand cold better than the Asiatic, and that disease would be far more prevalent in summer in the hot plains of Thrace.

Again, it was held by the most alarmist observers that war was at least unthinkable while the present Prime Minister, Mr. Gueshoff, was in office. It delights the Bulgarian mind to think that in this final fashion the Oriental, so inclined to subtlety and intrigue, was hoodwinked.

The supreme illustration may be drawn from the case of the Kirk-lisse fortifications. General von der Goltz announced in his reports that the fortress would not yield to the Bulgarians. It could only be taken, even by Prussian troops, in six months. I have heard a

Bulgarian general compliment the German on the accuracy of his remark. It was a safe one to make, he said, because no fortress existed.

There are indeed on the north side of the place two strong forts, but there was no provision against investment of the town whatever. The German general's bluff was indeed unique in its sublimity. It was only possible because in Turkey no means existed for foreigners to ascertain the facts. Bulgarians and Greeks alone were likely to learn (from their compatriots on the spot) which of the German plans had or had not been carried out. The Bulgarian staff would be suspected by the Turks of knowing that the forts had never been built, and of an inclination therefore to attack the place. The Bulgarians, consequently, laid themselves out to make the Turks believe that they too, like the rest of the world, held Kirklisse to be an impregnable fortress. They took advantage of von der Goltz's statement; they reported on it as if they believed it, and

IN THE OLD FORT AT KIRKLISSE.

thus in the end, by the triple means of an unexpected road, an unexpected army, and an unexpected knowledge of the absence of forts, they took the place unawares. A panic was thus created, Turkish confidence was destroyed ; the rest of the war was a foregone conclusion.

Clearly, however, all these qualities would have gone for little without intense enthusiasm. The hatred of oppression had been for many centuries in the very blood. It alone inspired the readiness for death and the positive thirst for getting to close quarters which broke the nerve of the finest Turkish troops, and won the war.

In more prosaic ways, zeal is necessary for success. Transport would have broken down if the very meanest driver of an ox-waggon had not had his heart in the cause, and the army would have found itself without bread. I saw a little illustration of this spirit at one of the British hospitals. Late at night a convoy of wounded arrived. It was impossible to

find beds for all, and we begged for straw from the drivers. The Bulgarian officer attached to the hospital gave them orders to this effect, which would have completely protected them from blame. But nothing would induce the men to part with forage for the oxen which they might not be able to replace. They had a task to do more essential for winning the war than any work for the wounded, and they kept in view the larger aim.

Compare this motive with that which would have animated the British army if war had not been averted at the time of the Agadir crisis in 1911. There would have been total ignorance of the real cause, and no motive force except the unreal and fleeting animosity engendered by a section of the press. Even the unrivalled ardour of the Bulgarians was necessarily diminished after some weeks, when fatigue and sickness and hunger had had their inevitable effect. An army which had begun the war without a clear issue and a well-founded zeal would, where the level of intelligence

was high enough to require a motive other than fanaticism or dull obedience, have marched to rapid disaster. Even among the Turks, who of all soldiers in the world could be led to fight without an understanding of the issue, the want of zeal was obviously fatal.

The great enemy in war is sickness, and here again zeal is essential. Sickness follows from fatigue and deprivation, which can be met, partly, it is true, by efficient transport, but depends largely on the psychological condition of the troops. This fact was curiously illustrated by the sickness that prevailed in the Balkan war. Cholera is supposed to follow on the dirt of insanitary camps, but the Turkish troops fell before the cholera long before they reached any settled camp at Chatalja or elsewhere. The Bulgarian army following on their tracks had a strange experience. An officer of the general staff who rode in its rear told me that after leaving the open country east of Lule Burgas, he began to notice corpses by the roadside. Not

having heard of any fighting in this part, he was puzzled, and feared that Bulgarian troops, pressing ahead of the army, had cut down Turkish stragglers. Riding as he was with a press correspondent, he endeavoured even to conceal the facts by showing the European a different route. But the corpses increased in number, and at last in a boggy place a whole convoy of waggons and carriages was found stuck fast. In them and around them were no fewer than 500 dead men. There was even a motor-car whose occupants sat dead. It then for the first time suddenly dawned upon the horrified spectators that all this death was the work of disease. What is noticeable for our purpose is, that there had been nothing of the usual material causes to create cholera at this stage. It was the work of fatigue and hunger and fear. The Bulgarian army had an unexampled stock of zeal, but even theirs was not equal to the strain.

Combined with purpose and persistence, there is a kind of idealism in the Bulgarian

composition which can only be described as faith. For long years the rebel leaders have had to consider whether violence and insurrection would pay. Viewing the horrible results of insurrection in Armenia and Macedonia, I have often urged on them that the life and happiness of the people could not be served by resistance, unless liberation by war was absolutely assured as the result of such tremendous sacrifice. Balancing the advantages, this argument appeared to me unanswerable; but I never found Macedonians who even appeared to understand the point of view. It was clear to them that their cause was just; it seemed to them certain that Europe, living in wealth and freedom, must sympathise with it. If its attention was called to the truth by terrible proofs of tyranny, and if the oppressed were willing to pay the price, liberation was sure to follow. The idea seemed to rest on some notion of a moral law controlling affairs. Such a mentality would surely be fine material for religion

if religion in its current and institutional forms were adapted to the real needs of men.

The quality is illustrated in the admiration, which almost amounts to worship, of Mr. Gladstone. Bulgarians will admit that Mr. Gladstone's efforts for them failed entirely. England in actual fact was the worst enemy of Bulgaria, and her Government was undeterred by Gladstone's eloquence from action which imposed on two million people a fate almost unexampled in cruelty. But the evil facts are forgotten ; the great desires of Gladstone, and the fact that he called the attention of the world to the nation's cause, are remembered as the governing consideration. The same quality explains the extraordinary interest taken in movements abroad, such as the advocacy of Balkan liberation in England. It makes no difference to the Bulgarian mind that these efforts did not succeed. He is no less grateful for them now that his own sacrifice and courage have secured the benefits which the Great Powers would

have given if sufficiently moved by public opinion.

The English mind would apportion gratitude according to results. The Bulgarian mind, in many ways similar, is less logical, less opportunist, and more philosophical.

In 1908 the Young Turkish Revolution provided a chance of removing the miseries of the Macedonians. It was the Bulgarians who would gain the most, and for a time their sufferings ceased. Other races, like the Armenians, did in the next two years begin to escape from misery through accommodating themselves to the new Government. The Bulgarians, though they saw that these races were gaining in various ways, and though the other methods of stubborn resistance had been tried by Armenia and by themselves with results entirely disastrous, would not for a moment attempt to make the best of the Young Turkish Revolution. It was in their eyes an unideal solution. So the rebel bands continued to act ; the miserable round of

resistance on a small scale and vengeance on a large one remained. It was evident that the Great Powers had abandoned reform and intended to give the Young Turks a chance. At the same time, the Bulgarian Government had definitely decided against making war. To the practical English mind, it was evident that in these circumstances fruitless violence increased the sum of misfortune. But again it did not seem possible for the rebel leaders, or even for the people of free Bulgaria, to understand the argument for compromise.

Bulgarians have never temporised with their masters and oppressors; yet for a people oppressed and physically unable to throw off the yoke, it would appear only sensible to mitigate its weight. Greeks and Servians have in various ways endeavoured to make life less intolerable. In recent years this has been reflected in the action of their Governments. They have ostentatiously stood aloof from the revolutionary policy of the Bulgarian. They refused to join him in standing

up to the Turks, and their policy has paid them well. Leading Bulgarians have been systematically impoverished and actually assassinated. Favours have been showered on the more submissive party in order to withdraw adherents from the dangerous element. Sustained over a long period, the result has been the impoverishment of the Bulgarian cause and Church, so that a traveller in the towns of Macedonia or Thrace would find the wealthy families with whom he came in contact entirely Greek. He would get the impression of a Greek country, whereas in many cases these families are Greek only because it has been impossible for a Bulgarian above the humbler ranks to exist.

The policy of the stiff neck cost the Bulgarian race all the influence and wealth that it might have won by suppleness, and its position in the world seemed to suffer. For centuries no reward appeared to follow. To others a rational submission appeared wiser than quixotic persistence. But the reward has been

earned at last. In despite of all probability, it was the exercise of faith, hardened by ages of training, which has in our day shown itself the wise policy. An unrivalled power of endurance, tried in the fire, has brought recognition in the end. The undaunted generations of the past, if they viewed the present, would see the travail of their soul and be satisfied.

The Balkan campaign has made converts to war in general. Its merit is seen in liberated nations. The allies, it is held, were justified in fighting. Of course they were; but should the sacrifice have been forced upon them? The Powers had undertaken to grant autonomy; they nearly did so in 1908. They can solve every menacing question of bad government (e.g. in Armenia) by means of autonomy or division of spheres among themselves They are in a position to impose their will on oppressive governments. It is their function, as Sir Edward Grey suggested, to be the police of the

world. In the future, therefore, liberation should not require the sacrifices of war.

Again, it is said, this war will be economic. Its cost—in munitions, wasted labour, closed factories, destruction of houses and crops, consumption of flocks and means of transport, depreciated securities—will bear interest in commercial development. But as with liberation, the commercial development of the world requires only a degree of harmony among the Powers which is perfectly realisable. It would have been attained in the Balkans by Sir Edward Grey's policy of a European governor under the Concert, if the Turkish Revolution had not intervened.

The Balkan war is the most economic, and, from the point of view of the combatants, the most just that can be named; but the Powers, if their zeal for peace had been slightly greater and more positive, would have achieved the liberation without imposing the sacrifice. Therefore,

to establish the war as a proof that war is in any way beneficial, it is necessary to show that it has effects (which cannot otherwise be gained) on national character itself. We hear laudations of the self-confidence, the energy, the dignity that will accrue to the allied nations from their feats of arms. We heard the same of the Germans, the Japanese, the English after the Boer war. History has already decided what amount of reality lay in the argument. Its advocates are at least not anxious now to prove it in the case of the English. Virile qualities were equally developed in the Japanese before the cessation of their three centuries of peace. The inspiring force of German unity would have come without war. Nor can it be urged that small nations unfamed for conquest (for instance the Norwegians) are deficient in the physical and mental alertness attributed to fighting races. The fear that physical courage and contempt of death are only maintained by war, is natural; but history disproves it. On

that fear, so mistakenly encouraged by the recent war, is based the widespread and honest view that peace has its dangers ; and thus in critical moments the forces for peace, which might have defeated the interested factors making for war, are paralysed, and the die is cast for one more war.

For this reason the Balkan war needs close scrutiny. The Bulgarian, according to the militarists' theory, ought to be feeble for want of fighting. He had fought no war worth mentioning ; he had not even won his own freedom, like the Greek and Serb and Montenegrin ; he was a parasitic *protégé* of his Russian patrons. Yet in spite of all he developed a character as energetic, as virile, as resourceful, and as brave as any in the world.

THE END

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